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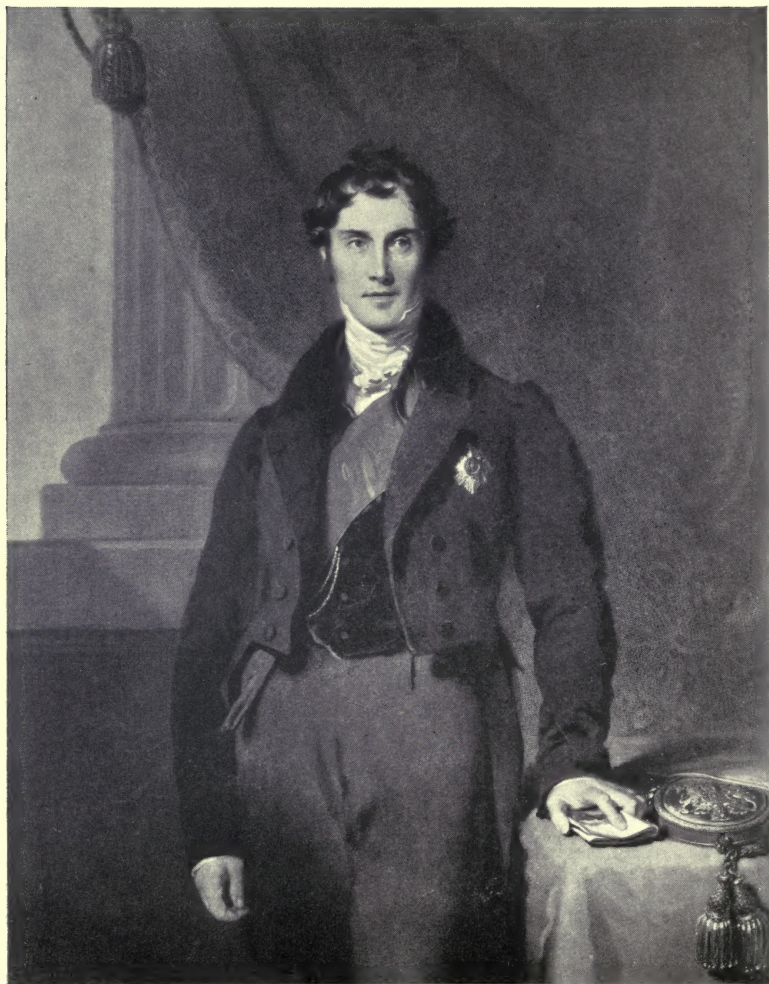












GEORGE, 4TH EARL OF ABERDEEN, K.T.

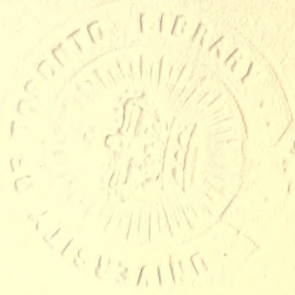
As Foreign Minister.

From a picture painted for Sir Robert Peel by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.  
Engraved by Samuel Cousins, 1831.



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THE  
LIFE OF GEORGE  
FOURTH EARL OF ABERDEEN  
K.G., K.T.



BY  
LADY FRANCES BALFOUR  
LL.D., D.Litt.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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## PREFACE

THE papers and correspondence of the Earl of Aberdeen, Queen Victoria's Prime Minister, were entrusted to me by his grandson, the Marquis of Aberdeen and Temair, in the year 1913. I also received a large number of papers from Lord Stanmore. His father, the Arthur Gordon who appears so often in this work, known in the House of Lords as the first Lord Stanmore, had devoted much time to the collection and the editing of the mass of State papers and correspondence left behind by Lord Aberdeen.

It had been the intention of Lord Stanmore to publish these papers on a scale which has not been attempted in these volumes. In fact, the vastness of the work was too overwhelming for him to achieve. After Lord Aberdeen's death in 1860, Lord Stanmore was much abroad, and his life was filled with public work. Lord Aberdeen's life was published in the series entitled the "Queen's Prime Ministers," and that again was the shortened précis of a one-volumed Life privately printed, but never published.

In Lord Stanmore's preface to the Short Life, he says it was with reluctance that he consented to write the book. He thought the life and nature of Lord Aberdeen's character were such as to make it peculiarly difficult to do them justice within the limits of a short biography. Lord Stanmore was conscious also that it must diminish the value of any future publication of Lord Aberdeen's correspondence—"a duty entrusted to me by the terms of my father's will."

More than sixty years have passed<sup>1</sup> since the death of the Prime Minister. The publication of the *Short Life* has undoubtedly made the editing of the papers left seem a work of some difficulty.

The vast and careful scale on which a longer memoir had been planned, made it almost impossible in these less leisured days to carry out the filial desire of the son, and the strong sense of duty which has throughout inspired the grandson.

In the light of this double inspiration, I have tried to present a readable and understandable picture both of the times in which Lord Aberdeen lived, and of the strong personality of the Queen's Prime Minister.

It is not often remembered that he was Castlereagh's Ambassador to Vienna in 1813, that he twice held the Seals of Minister for Foreign Affairs, before, at the age of sixty-nine, he became the Prime Minister of "the girl of eighteen," whom he had seen ascend the Throne.

Lord Aberdeen was essentially, as he well describes himself, "a Minister of Peace, if ever there was one." Fate has almost entirely associated him with an unfortunate war.

His life in his native Scotland was as remarkable as any other part of his career. If I have dwelt out of proportion on this feature, it is because I felt it to be of deep and dramatic interest. It presents a continuous picture of what "the landowning class," as they are now contemptuously called, have done in building up the prosperity of the country in all parts of Great Britain.

I have endeavoured to follow the lines laid down by Lord Stanmore, and to select from the correspondence the things which seemed most to illustrate the times, and the man who lived in this epoch, and left his impress on his country.

I have resisted the temptation "to write before and

after," to make the past fit into the present. That history does repeat itself must come forcibly to the mind of every student of the world's public affairs. That public men are mortal, and capable of very obvious mistakes; that nations change their outlook, and the temper of to-day is not necessarily the temper of to-morrow, is self-evident to those who write; whether it is so to those who read, depends much on how honestly history has been presented.

I can only say that I have tried to represent things as they are revealed by the documents before me. If I have failed it is not the fault of the written words, which are nothing if they are not consistently upright and sincere, and "as the noonday clear."

Two chapters have been devoted to the Disruption within the National Church of Scotland. I have endeavoured to write the story so as to make it comprehensible, even to the mind of an Anglican, and an Englishman. The papers on this controversy ran into eight hundred closely printed pages. The two chapters were submitted to the late Lord Guthrie and to Sir William Robertson Nicoll. Both have kindly read and approved them. Lord Guthrie, the son of a Disruption Father, was so interested in the revival of these ancient ecclesiastical controversies, that he made himself quite ill over their perusal. To those who feel they are of no interest, and contain no lesson, it can only be said that they may be left unread, without the history being interrupted.

One personal note may be allowed me. Lord Aberdeen was born in 1784, and my father died in 1900. When Lord Aberdeen died, I was an infant. As I have traced the features and conned the mind of this great Minister, I have come on much in the papers that has proved the deep veneration in which he was held by my father, and even yet more by my



mother. Something of that long chain of association was, no doubt, in the mind of the present Marquis when he asked me to write or, more properly, to edit, the *Life*. The war, with its personal anxieties and national absorption, has made the work long overdue. But it is not altogether inappropriate that the history should now appear. The world is weary of strife and warfaring, and it may have leisure to read and ponder on the work of one who was among the earliest heralds of the gospel of peace and a good understanding among the nations.

FRANCES BALFOUR.

32 *Addison Road, London.*

*July 19, 1922.*



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## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS (1784-1805)

“O happy is the man who hears  
Instruction's warning voice;  
And who celestial wisdom makes  
His early, only choice.  
For she has treasures greater far  
Than East or West unfold;  
And her rewards more precious are  
Than all their stores of gold.”

GEORGE HAMILTON GORDON was born at Edinburgh on January 28, 1784. His father, George Lord Haddo, died from the result of an accident before he succeeded to the title.

He and Lady Haddo were at the time residing in the beautiful castle of Gight, situated in a secluded valley five miles from Haddo House. The castle stands on the precipitous bank of the river Ythan, which here runs through a deep glen. Nothing is left of the castle save its ruined walls, holding vestiges of chapel and hall. Here occurred that event which in its sequel was destined to remove the future statesman from the place of his ancestral lands, and to bring him under influences which were to shape his career apart from the ways of his country and people.

The tradition runs that Lord Haddo, riding out from Gight, had to pass the castle well, now standing in the green garth of the domain, though probably at that period it was within the outer court of the castle. A girl was about to draw water, and the horse, startled by the noise of the chain, or by her sudden appearance, reared violently, and fell back with the rider, who was thus mortally injured. Lord Haddo insisted, however, on walking to the Castle door,

## 2 LIFE OF THE EARL OF ABERDEEN

in order to allay his wife's alarm; but very soon afterwards he expired.

Lady Haddo soon left the place where her married life had come to so sudden and unhappy an end, and she resolved to spend the rest of her life in England. It was not destined to be a long one; she never recovered from the shock of her husband's death, and lived in melancholy retirement until her death four years later, in 1795.

Her children accompanied her to England. She settled at Barnet in Hertfordshire, and it was there that her eldest son George received his earliest education, and later in another school at Parson's Green. By Lady Haddo's death her children were left in a position which was one of singular and unhappy isolation. Their grandfather, Lord Aberdeen, would naturally have stood to them in the place of the father that they had lost. This unfortunately was not the case, and to trace the strange circumstances in which the family was placed it is necessary to give some account of the ancestral history.

Like many of the great Scottish families, the early history of the Gordons is full of legend. Lord Stanmore writes: "That Bertrand de Gourdon, by whose arrow King Richard I was killed before the castle of Chalus in Perigord, left children, who settled in Scotland, and became the progenitors of the house of Gordon, is a proposition which I should hesitate to affirm; but it is one which, in the presence of other members of that house, I should equally hesitate to deny."

It is not from the senior branch of the family, which in the male line came to an end in 1408, that the Gordons of Haddo trace their descent. Half a century before the marriage of the last heiress of this line to Alexander Seton, who took the name of Gordon, a son of John Lord Gordon was established as Laird at Haddo in Aberdeenshire, and from him, in unbroken and direct male descent, springs the present line of Earls of Aberdeen. The Lairds of Haddo were a



tough and exceedingly long-lived race. Some of them came to a violent end on the battlefield or on the scaffold, otherwise they reached, or exceeded, the allotted span of life.

Sir John Gordon of Haddo distinguished himself in the Royalist cause. On March 19, 1644, he managed with a handful of men to surprise the town of Aberdeen, then closely watched and guarded by the Covenanting party. "Haddo's Raid" was completely successful. The bold cavalier, attended by some other gentlemen, and with a troop of about threescore horse, came galloping through Old Aberdeen to New Aberdeen, and the Provost and chief men of the city found themselves made prisoners of war. After other acts of violence, the old chronicle narrates :

"Go to hors schortlie, and cumis bak throw the old toun, about ten houris in the morning, with thair four captives; and, but bo to thair blanket, thay rode doun throw the Gallowget, none daring to say it wes evill done. Simlie it is to be markit the like seldom hes been sein that so few men so pertlie, and publictlie, sould have disgraceit sic a brave brughe by taking away thair provest, and the rest men of note, without any kynd of contradiction or obstacile."

Haddo, at this time, had his children living in Old Aberdeen for the sake of their education. He could hardly rely on their safety in a town thus outraged by this raid, so the chronicler notes, "he takis his young barnis at scooll hame behinde sum of his servandis." Thus, taking part in the triumphant return of his father, the future Earl and Lord Chancellor first appears upon the stormy scenes of the period.

On the following day Sir John Gordon sent the children, with the exception of his eldest son, back to school. George, the second son, was born October 1637, and his mother was Mary, daughter of William Forbes of Tolquhen.

The affairs of the Royalists were mismanaged, and Sir John Gordon, who had been appointed by the

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King next in command to the Marquis, had to retire to his house of Kellie before the Covenanting Army, led by the Marquess of Argyll. He was attacked in it by an overwhelming force, and after a brief resistance his artillerymen deserted, and he was forced to surrender both himself and his house to the enemy.

His children, including the future Earl, were gathered round him at this last fight. "He had sex young children within the place of Kellie; which, when it was rendeied, were all put to the yett saif and sound."

Then followed the complete spoiling and destruction of the house. "Statelie wes the plenishing within this hous, and plesant yardis and planting about the samen. First, they take out the staitlie insicht and plenishing, sic as bedding, naprie, veschel caldrouns, chandleris, fyre vexhele, quhairof their wes plentie, trists, cofferis, cabinetis, trunbris, and armour." Household gear, cattle and sheep were driven away. Thus was the house of Kellie spoiled and made waste.

Sir John Gordon was carried prisoner to Edinburgh, and there was no escape for such a noted Royalist. He was the first individual who was judicially condemned and executed for adherence to the Royal cause. To the King, whom he had served with such zeal and courage, he commended on the scaffold his children. In a short prayer he said, "I commend my soule to God, and my sex children to his Majesteis cair, for whose saik I die this day." "And albeit Haddoche wes ane auncient barron of good estait, and still ane loyall subiect to the king; hardie, stout, bold in all haserdis; freind to his freind, and terribill to his enemy, of a goodlyf and conversatioun, moderat, temperat, and religious; loth and unwilling still to give offence, and als loth to tak offence; and withall ane good nichtbour, loving and kynd to his tennentis, kinsfolkis, and freindis, yet thus he ended."

The children being thus bereft of parents and estate, "friendis took thrie of them, and uther thrie wes sent into Old Abirdene for lerning at the scoollis;



bot had not ane penny of thair father's estait bestowit upone thame."

George was one of those sent to Old Aberdeen, and when next heard of he was a distinguished scholar in King's College. Here he studied under John Strachan, who had a great reputation for learning. He took his Master's degree in 1658, and it is recorded that he was promoted to his degree first in order before the others of his own class or year. On his tutor's resignation, at his own request, the College appointed to the vacant regency his distinguished pupil, who thus became a professor the day after he ceased to be a student.

The family at Haddo were not forgotten at the Restoration, though no other benefit was conferred on them than the rescinding of the forfeiture of their title and estates. In the Act which was passed, in the first Scottish Parliament held after the King's return, honourable mention was made of the conduct and sufferings of Sir John Gordon. In consequence of this Act the eldest brother of the "sex," who had been put out of "the yett," recovered possession of the family estates.

The second brother remained at King's College till the spring of 1663, when he went abroad, resolved to devote himself to the study of law. The death of his eldest brother without male issue recalled him from the Continent, and placed him in possession of the estate and baronetcy. Sir George Gordon became a member of the Scottish bar, having in 1668, after the usual preliminary trials, been admitted by the Lords of Session "in and to the place and office of ane ordinarie advocat before them."

We next find him elected as one of the Commissioners to represent the county of Aberdeen in the second Scottish Parliament held by Charles II. To this Parliament were submitted certain proposals with a view to the union of the kingdoms. Popularly these proposals were regarded with aversion, as an attempt to overthrow the national independence. The King's

Commissioner, the Duke of Lauderdale, laid the letter under the King's hand before Parliament. The immediate adoption of an answer of assent was rudely pressed on the House by the Commissioner. Sir George Gordon was not to be intimidated either by the King's representative or the rash and arbitrary terms submitted to Parliament. Almost alone, he offered resistance to the measure, and when Sir George Mackenzie counselled a day's delay in the decision of Parliament, he found a seconder in Sir George.

Sir George's reputation as a lawyer did not suffer from his opposition to the Court. In 1678 he was made one of the King's Privy Council for Scotland, and in 1680 he was promoted from being one of the ordinary Lords of Session to the bench of the Supreme Court of Scotland, under the title of Lord Haddo.

Under the administration of the Duke of York, Lord Haddo continued to rise in reputation and office. He succeeded Sir James Dalrymple of Stair as President of the Supreme Court in 1681, and in the same year there died John Leslie, Duke of Rothes, the Chancellor of Scotland. There was a delay in filling up the appointment, and the Duke of York was expected to make it on his return from London in 1682. The new occupant of this high office was to have his appointment made known under extraordinary circumstances. The Duke of York had embarked for Scotland on the *Gloucester* frigate, accompanied by Lord Haddo and a numerous retinue. The ship struck on a sandbank off Yarmouth, on May 5. Nearly two hundred persons perished, and the Duke himself, with difficulty, and most unfortunately for Scotland, escaped by leaping from his cabin window into a small boat. Two or three others were thus saved, and the Duke called to Sir George Gordon to follow their example. In leaping he fell short of the boat into the sea. In the excitement of the moment the Duke called out, "Save my Chancellor!" thus giving the first intimation how this high dignity had been bestowed.



On reaching Edinburgh the Duke laid before the Privy Council the King's letters patent, constituting Sir George Gordon of Haddo to be Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, in place of the Duke of Rothes. The Duke of York had from an early period of his residence placed great reliance on the ability and character of Sir George, and, in 1682, he was promoted to the Peerage under the title of the Earl of Aberdeen. The patent recited the eminent services he had rendered the King by means of his splendid mental endowments.

The reference to his father's loyalty and suffering was made more marked by the record how Lord Aberdeen "now sat in that very city and judgment seat where his father suffered so sad and unjust a sentence."

During a period of more than two years the administration of public affairs remained in Lord Aberdeen's hands. He had a reputation for a close and steady application to business, and he superintended with watchful care and a steady hand every department of public affairs. His singleness of eye and disinterested mind were typical of his descendant, the fourth Earl, and in the succeeding generations it is possible to trace the same aloofness of mind and love of justice, which made them not always understood by those whose outlook on the affairs of Church and State was more coloured by the passions of personal and party gains.

The Lord High Chancellor was entirely at one with the Government in prosecuting with the utmost rigours of the law the party in rebellion in the south and west of Scotland for the cause of civil and religious liberty. Outside the law he was not prepared to go, and when the Duke of York's obsequious Privy Council originated a scheme of unlawful rigour against the rebels, that husbands and fathers should be made responsible by fine and imprisonment for the opinions of their wives and daughters, he declared as a judge that such an order

could not be carried out under any existing statute, and as a Minister he declined to propose any alteration in the law. His remonstrances were unheeded, and rather than countenance measures which were alike unjust and illegal he resigned his high office into the hands of the King.

There was no comprehension of this "Just Judge." But Lord Aberdeen's loyal services were of value to the Government, and even the ignoble conspirators who had got him out of office made new overtures to him, "if he would have condescended to act as Chancellor with the juncto." He told the King, except he exercised (office) as freely as his predecessor the Duke of Rothes did, he could not serve him; and the King telling him "he wold be served in his owne manner and conforme to his own measures, he then voluntarily demitted."

These transactions took place in London in May, 1684. The Earl travelled back to Edinburgh, there dismantled his house, and retired to his Aberdeenshire estate. The Earl of Perth succeeded him as Lord Chancellor, with the Duke of Queensberry as Lord Treasurer. They set to work remodelling the different offices at their disposal, and engaged in an effort to crush and disgrace the eminent statesman they had supplanted. A rumour reached them that a conventicle had been held within the County of Midlothian, of which Lord Aberdeen was Sheriff principal. They began with pious zeal to proceed against him for not having suppressed it. Lord Perth had succeeded him in this office as well as that of Lord President. Their researches into this matter led to the discovery that the conventicle had indeed been held, not, however, in Lord Aberdeen's county, but a few yards within the march of the property of their own peculiar friend and fellow-conspirator, the Earl of Tweeddale. Whereupon, the chronicler says, "the matter was suffered to sleip."

Their next effort was to get hold of Lord Aberdeen's papers, hoping to find in them incriminating matter.



Sir John Dalrymple's person and papers were seized and he was committed "to the tolbuite of Edinbrugh. The Hy Tresurer was incensed that Sir John would give them no discoveries against the Earl of Aberdeen." These and other efforts to blacken and sully Aberdeen's reputation, though carried on over a considerable period, came to naught. William Fletcher, one of Aberdeen's advocates, brought sharp rebuke on himself for saying, "My Lord Aberdeen could justify all the interlocutors he had procured when he sate on the bench, and that he nather was guilty of injustice nor malversations."

Lord Aberdeen continued to take an active part in Parliament after his withdrawal from office, but after the landing of the Prince of Orange he retired to the country. William III regretted that he could not obtain his services, for Mackay had represented him as being "the solidest statesman in Scotland; a fine orator, speaking slow but strong."

He remained a non-juror till the accession of Queen Anne, when he emerged from his retirement and for the first time took the oaths to the new Government. He lived to a great age and died in 1720 at Kellie, from whence he had been driven out as a child, and from whence his father had been carried to the scaffold, seventy-six years before his own peaceful end in the place of his ancestors.

His son William, as Lord Haddo, had been elected, after the Union, to the Parliament of Great Britain as member for Aberdeenshire. The election, after much debate, was set aside in 1714, on the ground that the eldest sons of Peers had not been allowed to sit in the Scottish Parliament, and were therefore ineligible for a Scottish seat in the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

Lord Haddo was a strong Jacobite, and the House of Commons may have considered that fact more than the question of constitutional law, which was strained by the decision. Earl William married, first a daughter of the Duke of Atholl, and secondly

a daughter of the Duke of Gordon. These alliances did not help to detach him from the cause of the House of Stuart. He corresponded with the Jacobite leaders, and masses of letters in cypher are preserved in the archives at Haddo House. He did not join the Pretender in 1745, though he was much interested in his earlier success. "Fortunately for the interests of the family," he died somewhat suddenly.

His eldest son and successor, George, according to the prudent custom of Scottish families at that time, had been brought up as a Whig, and he at once declared his adhesion to George II. He lived till over eighty, and died in 1801, surviving his eldest son George, Lord Haddo. He formed a marked contrast to his father, being a man of exemplary character, refinement and taste. He married, in 1782, Miss Baird, daughter of William Baird of Newbyth, sister to the famous General Sir David Baird. They were the parents of seven children, of whom the eldest was not twelve years of age, and the youngest barely four, at the time of the death of their father.

Lady Haddo was not on friendly terms with Lord Aberdeen. She had expressed a well-grounded disapproval of his dissolute mode of life, and his interests were removed from her and his grandchildren by other relations not compatible with the legitimate claims of his name and race. He had been persuaded or coerced by powerful friends to send the young Lord Haddo to Harrow, but there his intervention ended. He refused to take upon himself any of the responsibilities attaching to the bringing up of his grandchildren, and their other relatives seem to have been afraid to intervene or assist them in any way.

George, when between the age of eleven and twelve, addressed a respectful request for help to his grandfather, but finding his request completely unheeded, he showed a rare judgment, in one of his years, when he turned elsewhere for parental advice and guardianship.



Henry Dundas, afterwards created Lord Melville, was at that time the most powerful man in Scotland. Lord Haddo had been well acquainted with him, and after his death Lady Haddo had occasionally sought his advice and help. To him in his difficulties the boy turned, and Henry Dundas at once responded to his appeal. The condition of the young family was such as to commend them to the interest of anyone conversant with the facts, and bound, as Henry Dundas was, by the ties of friendship. He was also probably not unmindful of the influence he would thereby attain over one of the most powerful families in the north of Scotland. From that time Dundas's house became Lord Haddo's home, and his only sister Alicia lived for the next thirty years as a daughter with Lady Jane Dundas, under whose maternal care all the children came on the death of their mother. As the five younger brothers grew up, two of them, William and John, entered the Navy, and lived to attain the rank of Admiral. Two others, Alexander and Charles, obtained commissions in the Army. Alexander was a favourite aide-de-camp of the Duke of Wellington; he was already a Lieutenant-Colonel, and had been created a K.C.B. when killed at Waterloo, at the age of twenty-eight. Charles died Colonel of the Black Watch in 1835. The remaining brother, Robert, entered the Diplomatic Service, and his correspondence with his eldest brother appears often in the family papers.

Dundas lived at Wimbledon, and there was no more frequent visitor in his house than Mr. Pitt. From the first he took the keenest interest in Lord Haddo, and as the youth grew older their friendship and intimacy increased. At the age of fourteen Lord Haddo again took a decisive step. A right is given by Scottish law to one reaching that age to name for himself "curators," or guardians. Lord Haddo named in that capacity Mr. Pitt, then Prime Minister, and his earliest friend, Henry Dundas. They both accepted the charge, and from that time

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their ward lived with them alternately. Thus the disadvantages of his family circumstances led him in early youth into direct contact with the master minds of his age. It was a veritable "school of the prophets" into which he entered, and by his own happy choice he had selected the greatest statesmen of the time for his guardians and leaders.

We know very little about his school life. Harrow gave him perhaps the only good gift a public school can give, some friendships with men who were to be his comrades and colleagues through life. Among these were Palmerston and Althorp; and there also he met Peel, Lord de Grey, Lord Ripon, and Lord Binning, afterwards Lord Haddington, with whom in particular he contracted an intimacy which was to last through their mutual lives.

At Harrow he was known as a quiet and studious boy. His interests were classical and he devoted himself to Greek scholarship, in which he obtained distinction. He was a wide reader outside the usual grooves of school work, and acquired an acquaintance with the Italian poets which was said to be greater than most men attain in a lifetime. He read also such histories of modern Europe as were then at the command of the student. When the time came for leaving Harrow, Lord Haddo proposed to continue his studies at Cambridge University. His grandfather refused to furnish him with the means for what he called a needless extravagance. Lord Haddo's curators were of a different opinion, and the following letter shows that Henry Dundas did his best to put a more enlightened view before Lord Aberdeen:

*Wimbledon, Oct. 10, 1800.*

MY DEAR HADDO,

I send you a letter I have received from your grandfather. I do not know if my letter will make any impression on him, but I take it for granted you do not mean to acquiesce in the principle that your



Rank supercedes the necessity of education, and if you sincerely wish to go to the University, means must at any rate be fallen upon to send you there.

Yours Affect.,

HENRY DUNDAS.

The curators jointly threatened Lord Aberdeen that if he would not properly provide for the education and expenses of his grandson, they would themselves advance what was necessary from their personal funds.

It is not known to which course Lord Aberdeen consented. In one way or the other Lord Haddo was enabled to follow his own desire, and he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, in October 1800.

Succeeding to his title on the death of his grandfather in 1801, Lord Aberdeen took steps to continue his relations with Mr. Pitt, and for the remainder of his minority associated him with other trustees, whose relations may have been more formal, but could not have been more parental on the one hand, or more filial on the other.

*Walmer Castle, Oct. 22, 1801.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I am sincerely obliged to you for your very kind letter and accept with great pleasure the Testimony it gives me of your Partiality and Regard, of which I am persuaded I shall allways have reason to be proud. It cannot I fear be in my power to render any material assistance to those with whom you have joined me, but I am happy to think they will not want it; and I can at least answer for it, that you will find me at all times (as indeed I have long been) sincerely interested in whatever concerns your happiness and credit.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

W. PITT.



He collected while at Cambridge a fine library consisting of early editions of the classics, and of early Italian poetry. It included the *De Officiis* of Cicero, printed by Fust at Mayence in 1464, the Dante of 1486, and many other rare editions of works. His friends at College were men of like mind with himself, and with many of them he carried on a life-long correspondence.

When the Peace of Amiens reopened the Continent to British travellers, Lord Aberdeen was among the first to take advantage of it. One of the few letters preserved from Pitt deals with the manner of his going.

*Park Place, Sunday, Dec. 20, 1801.*

MY DEAR LORD,

On my return from Cambridge yesterday evening, I found your letter. If it were not for the circumstances you mention, I confess I should have rather inclined to doubt whether you would not have found it more advantageous to defer your visit to Paris to a later Period; But I certainly do not think that it is now desirable for you to make any change in your plan.

“The question of being introduced to Bonaparte (if contrary to your expectation it should present itself) seems to me to be one of mere etiquette, and therefore to be best decided by whatever you find practiced by others in similar situations to your own. Probably you may think it best on that or any other Point of ceremony to consult Mr. Jackson the English Minister whom you will find at Paris. If you think it will be of any use, I shall be happy to give you a Letter of Introduction to Him, and perhaps it may be some convenience, if you enable me to mention your companion’s Name to Him at the same time.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Yours most sincerely,

W. PITT.

In 1802 he visited Paris. Young though he was, one so nearly connected with Mr. Pitt, even though the great Minister was not at that moment in office, Lord Aberdeen was not a person to be neglected. He was the object of much attention from the First Consul and La Citoyenne Buonaparte, as on her invitation cards she still styled herself. Lord Aberdeen dined with them several times, almost in private, and had much conversation with the First Consul. He was greatly fascinated by his singular beauty and used to say "that Napoleon's smile was the most beautiful he ever saw, and that his eye was wholly unlike that of any other man." Some notes have been preserved which he made of his impressions of the state of France. The book throughout its length does not contain a single date, but the topics on which Lord Aberdeen writes prove that the observations were made during this, the first of many Continental journeys he was to make throughout his life.

## NOTES

I am apt to believe that Royalty in France has many more partizans than is generally understood. At a dinner given by Lord Cornwallis, there was a General Officer who admired an ornament in the middle of the table on which there were some medallions. He enquired who one was meant for, and upon being told the King of England, He exclaimed, "Good God, how like *mon pauvre Roi* ! "

Upon going to see Versailles, which is in a state of devastation and misery, I said to several of the tradesmen, that the town seemed to be in a state of prosperity and the people flourishing, notwithstanding the alterations which had taken place; their uniform answer was—"Prosperous, flourishing? How is it possible to be so without a King?"

Formerly Versailles was the most beautiful town in Europe, now it is the most miserable. I can easily conceive it to have been much more beautiful, but it is still one of the prettiest towns in France.

It is evidently the "Ton" at Paris to ridicule the Revolution and all species of Equality. I am persuaded that Buonaparte only made the King of Etruria in order to familiarize the people to the idea of Regal power being perfectly compatible with civil Liberty. At one time indeed, I have little doubt he intended to call himself Emperor of Gaul, or some such Title, but probably he thought the acquisition of the power of greater consequence and much easier to be accomplished than the Title.

The conversation in Paris, indeed through the whole of France, is perfectly unrestrained. You may hear a party of Jacobines railing at the present Government, and complaining of their being deluded with only a show of Liberty etc. etc. A party of Contents and Royalists all in the same Coffee House, talking most vociferously.

Moreau is a quiet, moderate man, and much respected in France. He allows that if it had not been for gross blunders of the opposite party his retreat must have been inevitably cut off. Indeed all their principal battles seemed to have been determined by some lucky chance, which gives us at once cause of regret and pleasure.

### *Journal from Calais to Paris.*

The first I saw of the French sailors, did not conduce to give me a very favourable idea of their skill, as it was with considerable difficulty we got into Calais Harbour, and not without a compleat wetting.



The rapacity of the Municipal officers is inconceivable. I was obliged to pay 220 Livres before even my carriage was suffered to pass.

From Calais we passed through an open hilly country to Boulogne, which seems to have suffered a great deal during the Revolution. Here, of course I narrowly inspected the Harbour, and I beg leave here to mention a few circumstances relative to the Bombardment of this place by Lord Nelson, last summer, and although it is an unpleasant employment to detract from the character of a great man, but truth obliges me to say, upon the authority of respectable eye witnesses on both sides, that Lord Nelson added nothing to his fame by that business. The sailors, as might be expected, behaved most gallantly but the business was badly planned, and of course could not be successfully executed; it was injudicious to make three divisions, as by that means they came into action at different times. Our sailors also were only armed with a cutlass, a Pistol, and tomahawk, whereas the French boats were full of troops armed with muskets, and defended from being boarded by a net-work 8 or 10 ft. high. One boat's crew however, would not leave England without muskets, and they succeeded in capturing a boat. The French Admiral (Latouche) said at the time he had no hopes of any of the French being saved, for he declared that if the English came a little nearer they might set every ship on fire. It is false that there were any of them chained, there were one or two aground.

I was pestered by a great number of women and children begging, and upon my enquiring the cause, I was instantly told because formerly there were several of the noblesse who lived in and near the town, but that now they were gone, the town was in wretchedness and beggary.

## 18 LIFE OF THE EARL OF ABERDEEN

At Abbeville, as I was returning to the Hotel, some women hissed and gave me some interruption, probably from my being in regimentals.

We lay the next night at Rheims. The Cathedral, which was also built by the English is extremely fine, and has suffered very little by the Revolution, the Mayor having taken up arms against the soldiery who wished to destroy it. It has however been despoiled of all its plate and riches, and some of the figures demolished. Particularly, compartments in which are represented history from the Old and New Testaments. The heads of nearly all the figures are cut off.

On Friday we slept at Chantilly, which I only mention, in order to observe that it is one of the most distressing scenes I have ever witnessed in France.

The magnificent Palace, once the abode of princely worth, is in ruins, and a band of regicidal Freebooters living in what were the stables. The woods and gardens are all neglected, and in disorder, in short the whole is calculated to excite the most melancholy ideas.

At Amiens I saw Lord Cornwallis who was very kind. I was invited to dine with Joseph Bonaparte, but did not go, in hopes of seeing him in Paris, when after a little Practice I should be able to speak French more Fluently.

The Priest at Calais, who seems a sensible man, informed me that the people came daily in greater numbers to Church. The religion of the people is greatly altered, and although there are not a very great number of Atheists, yet it appears to me that they are impressed with no awe, no warmth of devotion, professing the Catholic religion yet remaining indifferent about any.

Notwithstanding the ordinances of Government

in order to oblige tradesmen to keep open their shops on Sunday, one frequently sees those who in defiance of the Legislature shut them up, indeed there is certainly an air of Sunday through the town. The devastation amongst the ecclesiastical buildings is immense, there is not a village I saw but what there was a Church in ruins or greatly injured, the same is the case in many of the streets in Paris. The manners of the lower classes are certainly altered by the Revolution, but not nearly so much as one would be led to expect, from the great changes which have taken place in the Government; in general they are remarkably civil and obliging. They seem to have lost some of their National gait, which renders them still more like the Scotch, who indeed I should say are like the French.

I have scarcely ever seen a countryman with a muff, which practice used formerly to be universal, instead of which they wear a great pair of gloves, with fur inside and out. They dress worse, and more dirtily than before the Revolution, among the lower classes cocked hats seem to be the rage, one may see people of all descriptions, sailors, soldiers, tailors, blacksmiths, carters and even sportsmen and postmen, with these immense inconvenient articles. Caps of all descriptions are worn, from the red cap of Liberty to a cap made of Fox's skin, with the brush hanging down behind *à la guerre*.

Bonaparte is certainly popular, but it is more through necessity than anything else, not but what they must be grateful for his overturning the Directory. They all say, we lived in continual terror and danger; he came, we live at least in safety and tranquility if not in happiness. They are, however, sensible that it is only conferring Supreme power upon one man which before was possessed by five, and they



wisely prefer one Tyrant to any other number, in as much as Tyrants, always get worse in an inverted ratio, for instance of all Tyrannies a Monarchical Government is the best, an Aristocratical the worst, and a Democratical the worst possible.

It would be unpardonable were I to omit saying something of Moreau, whom I shall not hesitate to affirm is one of the greatest characters of the age. He is indubitably one of the best officers, if we except the Archduke Charles, perhaps the very best in Europe—he is extremely modest in his manners and temperate in his opinions, he possesses an accurate knowledge of the Laws of his country, (having practised formerly as advocate), joined to considerable learning. I think the most admirable trait in his character is that in whatever part he may have carried on the War, he has always made himself beloved by the inhabitants. This, when we consider that he is the only officer who never received any succours from the Treasury at home, is an incontrovertible proof of his consummate skill as a commander, and goodness as a man. I had the happiness of being introduced to him, and found him everything I had expected.

The Government of France at present is almost entirely Military. The Generals are the people who are looked up to in the place of the ancient noblesse and whose alliances are coveted with equall avidity—even the apartments of Bonaparte in the Tuilleries which are extremely magnificent (formerly the royal apartments), are decorated almost entirely with military ornaments, swords, helmets, shields, etc. all scattered about in the greatest profusion. In the magnificent hall, where the great dinners are given, I discovered nothing but statues of eminent military characters, such as the great Condé, Marshall

Turenne, Chevalier Bayard, the Great Duquesne, Marshall de Luxembourg etc., etc. A martial air reigns through the town, soldiers parade most of the principal streets, and keep the peace. The utmost respect is paid to everything military—but although the influence of the army is thus predominant, yet Bonaparte neither as chief nor in his civil capacity is quite absolute, as has been proved by the rejection of the code of Civil Law proposed by him, and the adoption of which he was known to have had very much at heart. The fundamental principle of the constitution is, that all Laws must originate with, and be proposed by, the Consulate. The Legislative Body have thus the power of rejecting this proposal, or of ordering it to pass into a Law. It is true however that the Chief Consul by virtue of what is called an “arrête” can do what he pleases, but it is as a violent proceeding, and never acted upon but on trifling occasions. I understand, however, that he is determined to carry his proposed Civil Code through all opposition, and in this manner, namely, by getting rid of everyone who opposed it; which is done by declaring the necessity of a new election.

Bonaparte takes care of course that no obnoxious member shall be re-elected; in this manner they go on rejecting twenty or thirty of the old members daily, they are however to be allowed to sit, until the first of Germinal, when the Code is to be proposed again and no doubt carried. All Bonaparte's friends are much surprised at this strong measure, the consequences of which nobody can foresee, but I think the sentiment of his enemies seems exaltation, and of his friends dread. He himself probably thinks that the object is tantamount to any danger to which he may be liable, and therefore through a real desire to do good, and perhaps relying

upon his popularity, he hopes all may turn out well.

Bonaparte has returned from Lyons with the title of first Consul of the Italian Republic. I should suppose that this must have been understood by the negotiating parties, for if not it is calculated to produce serious consequences, as in all probability he will soon make himself First Consul of the Helvetic and Batavian Republics. It is impossible to calculate the advantage which France must receive from the Incorporation of these three Republics. As in each of them will be organised at least thirty thousand men. There will be then on the Frontiers of France a Force of 90,000 men, ready to march at a moment's warning. Bonaparte was received with no particular demonstrations of joy.

Soon after he arrived there was a review at which I was, after which I was introduced to him, he talked for about a quarter of an hour.

The Spectators were very numerous, yet no joy was shewn. All this very strange, but I apprehend it springs from a kind of jealousy mixed with their admiration, which must for some time be the case, until all the popular ideas of liberty have subsided, and the people are contented to sit quietly down under an absolute Government, which is the only one by which France can ultimately flourish, of this truth Bonaparte is perfectly sensible, as are all those who know the interests of France.

From France Lord Aberdeen went to Italy, and in Florence spent some interesting evenings at the house of the Pretender's widow, the Countess of Albany. At one end of the room the Countess sat with her bevy of visitors; at the other, cloaked and hatted, seated at a table, was Alfieri, alone, and apparently unnoticed by the little Court around



the Countess. Lord Aberdeen's acquaintance with Italian literature enabled him to have some converse with the poet, which he was not accustomed to have with British visitors.

Lord Aberdeen was anxious to travel in the Levant, and at length extorted from his two guardians a somewhat reluctant permission to gratify his wish.

At Malta he joined Mr. Drummond, the new British Ambassador to the Porte, and accompanied him to Constantinople. The Embassy touched at almost every island in the Ægean Sea in its route. After reaching Constantinople, Lord Aberdeen spent some time there, and after obtaining the necessary firmans he proceeded on a long journey through Greece and Asia Minor. In those days such wanderings were attended with much hardship, and occasionally with a certain amount of danger.

He stayed for a considerable time at Athens, where he rediscovered and excavated the Pnyx; he then crossed to Smyrna, and thence visited Ephesus and other points in Asia Minor. He returned to Greece and explored the Morea, visited Albania, and passing to Corfu, returned home, after an absence on the Continent of two years.

On his return to England in 1804 Lord Aberdeen resumed the life he had lived before going abroad, and he resided alternately with Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville.

On January 28, 1805, he attained his majority, and he then went to Haddo House to take possession of his estates, and receive a welcome and congratulations from his many tenants and county neighbours.

Lord Aberdeen had never visited the home of his ancestors since he had left Scotland as a child of only eight years old. Such impressions as he retained of his early life at Haddo were those misty and illusionary impressions which are made on the infant mind. His boyhood and early youth had been passed among the most cultivated and illustrious men of the time. His school and his various homes

were situated in some of the most beautiful of English counties. He had travelled early and far, and he had lingered amid the Southern scenes of a great past. There he had seen the vestiges of a complex and ordered civilisation, set amid a natural scenery, untouched in its glowing beauty and richness by the history of the decay and ruin of vanished nations. Whether at home in England, or travelling abroad, the surroundings of his life had been totally unlike the conditions which existed in Scotland at that date; and his imagination had never pictured what awaited him on his return to his native land.

His son has recorded that Lord Aberdeen could but rarely be induced to speak of these early days, or the rough awakening he was to experience. When he did recall them, he spoke "with great force on his sensations when brought face to face with the realities." It was very literally the nakedness of the land that lay before him.

Two hundred years had passed since the union of the crowns, and the union of the countries was barely seventy years old at the date of Lord Aberdeen's birth. Aberdeenshire lay remote from the tide of prosperity and common interests, which was slowly linking up the two countries. When the north of Scotland began the movement of enlightened progress, it was no laggard in the race, and its people were to take the lead in everything that needed commercial sagacity and agricultural science; but that period was only just looming on the horizon of its history at the date when Lord Aberdeen came to his home.

When he had mastered his first deep disgust at the backward condition of agriculture, the miserable dwellings and half-savage habits of the people, the drinking and coarseness of the gentry, the inclemency of the climate, the ugliness and monotony of the country, bare and undulating and treeless, he entertained wild ideas of breaking the entail and disposing of the property. He saw he could not do this, and then the intention of permanent absenteeism



presented itself as another form of temptation. It was not until after many days of mental conflict that his intense desire to escape to more smiling regions gave place to the conviction that it was his duty not to abandon, but to improve the vast territorial possessions to which he owed his place and position in the world.

To desert those who were living under his influence was clearly impossible, and the work which lay to his hand was to improve those conditions, which he felt so keenly were neither those of progress nor of civilisation.

It is rare in any age that one born to the name and position inherited by Lord Aberdeen should have been brought up until he had attained his majority in scenes so remote from the lot in which his inheritance was cast.

Scotland has always suffered from so many of her sons being educated in England, leaving them without the knowledge of that race and country from which they have sprung. Too often they neither share nor understand the beliefs and traditions of their own countrymen. Yet in the beginning of the nineteenth century, had Lord Aberdeen remained in the remote and isolated north of Scotland he might have differed very little from those neighbours whose lack of refinement he felt so keenly, when called upon to view them in the light of social acquaintances.

Had he not been conversant with a different standard of comfort and well-being within the rural districts of England, he might never have taken rank among those who were bent on being reformers and benefactors on their native soil. That the young man was not over-fastidious can be demonstrated from any of the records of the condition of the country-side at this time.

"A tree in Scotland is as rare as a horse in Venice," was Dr. Johnson's dictum, and there was a larger amount of truth in the Saxon gibe than was always the case where Johnson and Scotland were concerned.



The ancient woods had been laid low, wastefully used as fuel, and destroyed as cumberers of the soil, or sold by impecunious and absent landowners who wasted their revenues by dissipation at the English capital and Court.

In agriculture the cultivation of the turnip made no real progress till after the famine of 1782. That disaster taught farmers a severe and much-needed lesson, and at last the ancient and outworn methods were abandoned. Before the famine there were not two hundred acres put under turnip in any one year.

Improvement had set in by the time Lord Aberdeen came to his home, but how much it was needed, and how little had been effected in the outer face of nature and man, may be gauged by the impressions made upon him.

In writing to his friend, Hudson Gurney, three or four days after attaining his majority, he says, "I have feasted about eight or nine hundred neighbours as well as the principal gentlemen of the County, and I have been immersed, not in Greek [as Gurney supposed], but in Port and Claret."

Lord Stanmore wrote thus, regarding his father's first arrival at Haddo:

The scene before him was certainly cold and cheerless. The short lime avenue before the house terminated in a dreary and extensive peat moss, which lay stretched between it and the grim high walls of a distant deer park. Snipe were to be shot in the marshy swamp which reached to the foot of the garden terrace. Stacks of fuel and sheds of lumber were piled against the walls of the house itself. The neighbouring lairds, not excluding the few peers who lived almost wholly in the country, were uneducated, and had little in common with "Athenian Aberdeen."

Three o'clock in the afternoon was the ordinary

hour of dinner, at which every gentleman present was expected to propose a toast and every lady a sentiment. A particular small kind of raw turnip appeared on the table as the winter dessert. Stores of salt meat were laid in for winter use. There was one house on the estate, besides the great house, which paid window tax, but only one. Women habitually assisted to draw the plough; and the houses of the peasantry, and even the smaller farmers, were of the poorest description. It is difficult to believe that even the remotest districts of our island could have been so far behind the conditions which had been attained by the more civilised parts of the kingdom. One anecdote will be sufficient to show how little advance had been made, at all events in luxury. The umbrella which Lord Aberdeen brought down with him on this occasion was the first ever seen in the parishes of Methlick or Tarves, and on going out with it, he was repeatedly stopped by curious persons, who asked him to put it up and close it again. Having one day performed this operation several times, at the request of an old man, he was rewarded by a long sigh, a grave shake of the head, and the ejaculation, 'Eh, they're braw chiels i' the Sooth.' The contrary opinion was expressed by the old huntsman of the family, who declared that the young Earl would have been a fine man, "gin they hadna ta'en him to England, and *spoiled his education.*"

When this was repeated to Lord Aberdeen he wrote to his friend Gurney :

I by no means despise the old huntsman's reflections. My father certainly contrived to make himself the most popular character of this county by conforming to the pursuits of the country, and by the art of concealing the learning and rationality he possessed,

and of which, indeed, few people had more. This appears to me enviable.

Enviably it might be, but Lord Aberdeen's gifts did not lie in this direction, nor at any time of his life could he successfully affect interest in that which did not interest him.

Once convinced that "duty stern and high" demanded any sacrifice of him, Lord Aberdeen never failed to pursue the appointed task. That in the course of long years he lived to see his particular wilderness blossom as the rose, that his labour for the country and his own property became a labour of love, and that he had the reward of seeing his estates increase in prosperity and in material value, lay still in the unknown future. What conditions he found, and what conditions he left when his life ended, are well recorded in an interesting report, covering the period from 1801-1860, by Mr. George Muirhead, F.R.S.E., during the time that he was factor to the present Lord Aberdeen. Some extracts give a clear account of the estate and condition of things :

Previous to the early years of the eighteenth century agriculture in Aberdeenshire was in a very rude state, little or no improvement having been made in the cultivation of the land, which still continued to be cropped and managed by the unenlightened tenantry in the same manner as it had been for ages by their benighted forefathers. The whole country was bare and open; no fences, trees or plantations for shelter or ornament were to be seen in the wide expanse of Buchan and Formartine. Moors, mosses, and barren wastes, interspersed with bogs and morasses, covered the greater part of the surface of the ground. The cultivated lands were continually soaked by the copious rains and melting snows of winter, and poached into mortar by the heavy feet of the drowsy steers which dragged the



cumbrous "twelve owsen" plough along the crooked furrows, which were thus rendered sour and unfruitful and yielded poor and scanty crops.

Artificial drainage, as well as the use of lime for agricultural purposes, was almost unknown. There were no roads or bridges, and no means of conveying grain to the market except on the backs of pack-horses.

The land was occupied by two classes—the proprietors and their tenants. Owing probably to the disturbed state of the country, the former took little or no personal interest in agriculture. The only ground they cultivated was near their mansions, and that just for household purposes. The tenants tilled only small patches of land on the running system. They followed the practices of their fathers, and these were thriftless and barbarous in the extreme. They sowed successive crops of corn on the same piece of ground until it was utterly exhausted, when it was left foul with weeds, to recover its powers by an indefinite period of rest. Oats, bere, and peas were the usual field crops, and the straw of these, along with such herbage as they could find in the field, formed the winter food of the cattle, which before the return of the spring were often so weak from starvation that they were unable to rise without assistance.

The improvements introduced by the enterprising and patriotic landowners, such as drainage and liming, turnip-growing and the sowing of the land with artificial grass seeds, were at first but slowly adopted by the tenantry.

The report then quotes the Rev. Francis Knox, Minister of Tarves. Writing in 1842, he says that agriculture in 1772 in that parish, a typical one of the Haddo estate, was in a truly wretched condition.

Green crops, with the exception of a few potatoes and coleworts in the gardens, were unknown. The horses employed in agriculture were diminutive in size and used merely for burden, never for draught. They carried out manure and home peats in panniers or creels. Carts and wheeled carriages were only to be found in the possession of landed proprietors. The dwelling-houses of the tenants generally consisted of two apartments—a “but” and a “ben.” The walls were built of stones and clay, and roofs covered with “divots” or thatched with rushes or heather cut from the neighbouring moors.

One bad harvest of 1782 and the disasters which followed it had a very depressing effect upon the tenantry, and the close of the eighteenth century found the general condition of the Haddo House estates much the same as it had been for the previous five-and-twenty years.

About 1805 the rise in the price of agricultural produce, and especially of cattle, which succeeded the breaking out of the war with France, stimulated the tenantry to engage in improvements on their holdings. From this time forward the progress was very rapid. As a proof of this, the rental of the estates rose about fifty per cent. in eight years. In the first ten years of entering into his property Lord Aberdeen laid out in improvements close on three thousand pounds.

The report traces all the enlightened management, the improved system of leases, and the example set by the landowner, through the years covered by this report. Much of it seems the commonplaces of to-day over agricultural Scotland, but Lord Aberdeen and many of the surrounding proprietors made possible by their generous terms, and steady leadership, the enrichment of the country and its people.

When an end came to his stewardship, the total he had expended in improvements, which included buildings, roads, draining and planting, was close on sixty thousand pounds :

He drained, he planted, he built. Tracts of

moorland became fields of corn, new schools rose in every parish, new buildings on every farm. Few knew the sacrifices of taste and inclination involved in his adoption of Haddo as an habitual summer residence. For many years it was in the highest degree repugnant to him. But in spite of inclination he persevered.

Lord Aberdeen lived to see the works of his hand prosper, and he learnt to love his patrimony with the love which was that of a native of Caledonia stern and wild. He never lost his early impressions of the rigours of the January winter in which he returned to his home. To the end of his large correspondence, much of it when written from Haddo dwelt on the changes and chances of climate. In early autumn, and even in the late summer of the north, he constantly forecasted snow-storms, and the blockading of roads he had in many cases himself constructed. Writing to a friend from Haddo in October 1809 he says :

It will make me truly happy to see you, but, alas ! this is not my Paradise : this is not Vall' Ombrosa of which you have heard so much, but a real Siberian waste. Far as the eye can reach no tree is seen. "Earth clad in russet scorns the lively green." The desolation of the exterior is only equalled by the appalling badness of the house. We will contrive, however, to despise these matters. If the storm rages we will sit close in the old Library. I'll broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie and bring pasties of the doe ! in short do all that is possible to make you forget the frozen latitude in which we are placed. I go to-morrow to visit a brother Kamskatchan.

It has been worth while to describe the condition of Aberdeenshire and the Haddo estates at the end of the eighteenth century, not only because it is part



of the history of the development of Scotland after the union of the countries, but because much of the character and talent of Lord Aberdeen may be traced to the race and country from which he drew his name and position. The success of the "Aberdonian," in all spheres of work, has passed into a proverb, and something of the tough dourness and long-headed sagacity of the race of men and women who have owned Aberdeenshire as their county, is due to the wrestle with a harsh climate and soil, which was never that of the Garden of Eden.

You may transport a Scot, and nurture him in the soft South, amidst the luxuries of the capitals of Europe, but untouched will remain those characteristics which have been welded into his being by conditions which have called forth the courage, endurance and sagacious ability of the sons of the North.

## CHAPTER II

### MARRIAGE (1805—1813)

“I feel, as everyone ought, that the most solid blessing in life, perhaps the only one, is the possession of a faithful and true heart.”—  
ABERDEEN.

LORD ABERDEEN'S residence at the University seems to have extended to two years. Lord Stanmore, writing of that period, says :

At that time, not only did the vicious practice of granting degrees to noblemen without examination prevail, but they were actually precluded from presenting themselves for examination even when desirous to do so.

He appears, however, to have continued the classical studies which he had carried on at Harrow, and to have made himself conversant with modern history, especially that of the Renaissance.

After what has been said of Lord Aberdeen's studious habits, the reader may be surprised to learn that one of his favourite recreations while at Cambridge was acting. Silent, shy and sensitive as he was, the personation of another seemed to give him confidence which in his own character he did not possess. On one occasion, he and two friends presented themselves under assumed names to the manager of the theatre at Canterbury, and were engaged by him to perform the principal parts in Shakespeare's tragedy of *King John*. Their success was complete, and the manager was most anxious to retain them in his company, offering Lord Aberdeen a liberal salary,

if he would only enter into an engagement for the entire season.

He did not leave this talented taste behind him when he left Cambridge, and when he joined the circle at the Priory he became a welcome recruit of the private theatricals carried on there. In one play in which there were but eleven male parts, there are to be found among the actors two future Prime Ministers, Lord Aberdeen and Lord Melbourne, two Ambassadors at Vienna, Sir R. Gordon and Lord Beauvale, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Mr. T. Sheridan.

Probably his curators knew nothing of his theatrical engagement at Cambridge, but after his marriage the watchful eye of Lord Melville was on him, and he expressed his anxiety to his former charge :—

*Dalchonzie, 1805.*

I am not much in the way of hearing anything at this place, but it was mentioned by somebody two days ago in conversation, that there was to be some theatrical entertainment at the Priory and that you was to have a part. Not knowing the circumstances, nor whether it is a thing which either yourself or Lord Abercorn are eager about, it may be presumptuous or perhaps rusticated in me to suggest doubts as to the propriety of your taking a part, but having these doubts, it can do you no harm merely to suggest to you whether at your time of life, and with the prospects of ambition which naturally present themselves to your view, it would not be as well to keep your oratorical talents for another theatre than that of any private spectacle of mere amusement, and of which as performers it is not likely you are to meet with many partakers of your own rank and condition in life.

If I am wrong you can think no more of my



doubt and throw this into the fire, but if you think there is anything in my suggestion it will not cost either Lord Abercorn or you much trouble to give it five minutes' consideration.

I have spoken to the Duke of York of a Commission to Alec, and about the latter end of next week Charles goes to sea under the care of Sir Home Popham. He will have a fair trial of his love of the sea, as Sir Home is going on a very distant service.

I remain, my dear Haddo,

Yours affectionately,

HENRY DUNDAS.

Lord Haddo took counsel with his other guardian and received an answer :

*Downing Street, Sunday, Oct. 27, 1805.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I feel very much flattered by your wish to know my opinion on the subject of your Note. Your character for attention to real Business cannot, I am sure, suffer in my eyes, nor I think in those of others, from your taking a Part in the Amusement of the Priory. They will, I hope, only be a prelude for graver Exhibitions; and whenever an opportunity may arise, you will be ready to obey the summons you remember in Tacitus :

“Nunc ego te ab Auditoriis et Theatris, in Pulverem atque Aciem et ad vera Prœlia voco.”

Ever, my dear Lord,

Most sincerely yours,

W. PITT.

It was not the private theatricals, which so disturbed Lord Melville, which were the centre of Lord Aberdeen's thoughts at the Priory. He was about to enter into the drama and tragedy of his

private life, and at this time all his hopes and prospects seemed of the fairest.

On attaining his majority Lord Aberdeen continued to live chiefly with Mr. Pitt, and his entrance into Society was into that circle which contained Mr. Pitt's friends. Among those to whose notice Lord Aberdeen was specially commended by Mr. Pitt was Lord Abercorn. John James, Marquess of Abercorn, occupied a position at that time less singular than it would be now—that of a man who, never sitting in a Cabinet, or accepting office, nevertheless, by virtue of the possession of rank and wealth, and the command of shrewd ability, exercised no inconsiderable influence on affairs, and was consulted by Cabinets and by the sovereign. In his youth Lord Abercorn's accession to the title had not been anticipated, but his handsome person, his great strength and the boldness and frequency of his adventures of gallantry had made him, at an early age, a marked figure in Society. Mr. Pitt had a very high opinion of his talents, and according to Walter Scott, declared that had Lord Abercorn remained a Commoner he would have become one of the most distinguished speakers of the Lower House. As a peer he was remarkable for pride and stateliness, but in the brilliant society which he gathered round him, literature and art held at least as high a place as rank and power. The imperious owner of Bently Priory, and those who habitually gathered there, have been sketched by Sir Walter Scott in a now forgotten article in the *Quarterly Review*. The picture is an attractive one. The Sheridans, Walter Scott himself, Lawrence the painter, Kemble the actor, Payne Knight the antiquary, were among the most constant and familiar guests, and to Lord Aberdeen the Priory soon became a home.

The eldest daughter of Lord Abercorn, Lady Catharine Hamilton, was one of those bright and rare beings who seem rather to rest on the earth's surface than to belong to it. The likeness of her graceful form, full of restless life, of her stately bearing, and eager, passionate face, has been preserved to us by Lawrence. Though the fire and animation of the mobile features are shown upon his canvas, it is evident that their beauty, great as it is, must have been enhanced by their constant play of varying expression, the *Lampeggiar dell' Angelico riso* which goes so far to form love's paradise.

To his friends, Lawrence whispered that his fortune would have been made if he could have dared to paint, as the embodiment of scorn, her attitude and expression, as with half-averted head and outstretched arm she allowed the Prince of Wales, whom she despised and thought she had reason to hate, to fasten an armlet above her elbow. With her Lord Aberdeen fell passionately in love, and she with him. There was nothing to impede his suit, and they were married on the 28th July, 1805. Lord Aberdeen worshipped her with complete devotion. He found in her society a happiness he had never known or imagined, and which was all the more appreciated from its contrast to his previous solitary and forlorn condition. Kind as his guardians had been, the dependence on strangers had been bitter to him. He had known no home or family life. There were none on whom he could freely lavish his strong affection, and he had early learned to repress all outward signs of feeling. For a few short years his happiness was now brilliant and unclouded, it was then lost for ever.

In these words, the son of his old age gives the history of what were truly the sanctities of Lord



Aberdeen's home. The happiness and subsequent tragical grief runs like the warp and woof of the web of life through all his subsequent history. It was a grief borne with a fortitude, and concealed by a reserve which even at this distance of time can be vividly read in the faded ink of these documents which tell the story of all the lives which were so early removed from the happy circle of Lord Aberdeen's home. The marriage made no difference in his relations with his two guardians and friends. Lord Melville, visiting the Priory after the betrothal, writes warmly of his pleasure in making Lady Catharine's acquaintance.

*Priory, July.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I can't pass a second day here without communicating to you my cordial contentment in the prospect of your affairs—after saying this I need hardly explain it by adding that I find Lady Catharine is really one among ten thousand, and that I don't find that any part of *all* the good I had heard of her has been exaggerated. I think her one of the most natural and most pleasing people I ever saw, and I am persuaded, though on so short an acquaintance, that she has one of those happy natures that, the more undisguised they are, must become the more attaching; and certainly there are circumstances, extreme cases, that almost preclude of common gradations of intimacy. She has perfectly complied with your desire in this respect, and met me at least half-way—but what I honour her for is the honesty with which she shows her regard for you without either mystery or affectation. It might not be sufficiently flattering in Lord A.'s ears, but you will do justice to the extent of my meaning when I declare to you that I am quite *satisfied*, and more so than I ever could have been if the choice of your destiny

had been left to me. I trust nothing will happen to detain you long,—I never saw any person's presence more desired than yours is here.

His relations with Mr. Pitt became even more intimate after the impeachment and trial of Lord Melville by the House of Lords, which took place in 1806, and at Mr. Pitt's request the young couple took up their residence at Lord Melville's villa at Wimbledon, so as to be near Mr. Pitt's house at Putney. It was not to be for long, and how profoundly the change affected Lord Aberdeen is set forth in his correspondence.

FROM LORD MELVILLE <sup>1</sup>

*Bath, Jan. 5, 1806.*

. . . . . Mr. Pitt was seized with another attack of the gout last night in the foot not attacked before. He is thin and feeble. Sir Walter Farquhar arrived here last night and I shall know more accurately to-day the state of his health. But without being a physician or hearing any report, upon my own observation I cannot help regretting most severely the early approach of the meeting of Parliament, before which time it does not appear to me possible for him to have recovered any competent degree of strength. . . .

*Conduit Street, 22nd.*

I have received your letter. The fatal Blow I am to receive from Putney, in the course of not many hours, would at any rate have disabled me

<sup>1</sup> Henry Dundas, 1742-1811. Mr. Pitt's most trusted colleague and intimate friend. Lord Advocate, 1775; President of the India Board, 1784-1801. Created Viscount Melville, 1802. First Lord of the Admiralty, 1804-5. Tried and acquitted by the House of Lords on a charge of peculation, as Treasurer of the Navy, 1806. Though acquitted he was shown to have been negligent in financial control, and declined to resume office when asked to do so by the Duke of Portland in 1807.

from joining any party at present; I will endeavour to give you a Call in the course of to-morrow, but I shall go on to Bath without delay. God bless you and yours. . . .

*London, Jan. 23, 1806.*

MY DEAR ABERDEEN,

The fatal Blow you will have heard is struck. I am going to Blackheath but will breakfast with you to-morrow on my way to Bath. My love to Lady Aberdeen, and I remain,

My dear Lord,

Yours very truly and affectionately,

MELVILLE.

LORD ABERDEEN TO THE REV. G. WHITTINGTON <sup>1</sup>

*Wimbledon, Jan. 24, 1806.*

MY DEAR WHITTINGTON,

With mingled sentiments of grief and horror I now write to you. Mr. Pitt is no more; the country has lost its only support in this dreadful time of disasters; and I have lost the only Friend to whom I looked up with unbounded Love and Admiration. The sun is indeed set, and what can now follow but the blackest night! Why are you absent? not that I can tell you anything; Lord Melville was here this morning in absolute despair. Everybody in the streets looks as if they had lost a father and Protector; and they are right; they have. He was sensible until a short time before he died, which he did with perfect resignation. He continued to talk when senseless, and wished to write to the Foreign Office and Treasury. But why do I expatiate on anything so distressing? To think that I am now writing at a Table, where I have seen

<sup>1</sup> Rev. G. Whittington, 1780–1807. Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.



him a thousand times, is indeed Agony. What will become of the Country torn by differing factions? While he lived, whether in or out of place, there was at least one object to which all eyes were directed, and which might have united all hearts in the time of danger. But now it is all void and blank: on whom can we put our trust? where can the mind repose with confidence?

Nothing is known of any arrangements, and you will not expect me to go over reports at present. For God's sake come to England; if I do not close my eyes, which I have not these last two nights, I shall be soon as miserable in body as in mind. The Blow is so dreadfully fatal, because wholly irreparable, and admits of no alleviation.

Farewell, and come to England.

Believe me your most affectionate Friend,

ABERDEEN.

#### LORD ABERDEEN'S JOURNAL

*Jan. 25, Saturday. Wimbledon.*—I have often resolved progressively to note down and record the political events and transactions which pass under my observation and are worthy of such attention, but more particularly every subject of that nature in which I am individually concerned or interested. More especially at the present time am I inclined to observe and record my own actions, as from the expulsion of Lord Melville last year, and the recent death of Mr. Pitt, I am deprived of the two only persons to whose influence I have so long looked up for assistance and protection.

Mr. Pitt, having spent some time at Bath without benefit, returned to Putney in order to attend the ensuing meeting of Parliament. His health remained in a fluctuating state, but when Parliament did meet

on the 21st of this month he was too ill to attend. I received on the evening of the 22nd a note from Lord Melville, intimating that his death might be expected, and on the morning of the 23rd I was informed he was no more, having expired that morning at a quarter past four.

From my having lived with him on terms of the utmost intimacy from my childhood, from his having been my guardian, and from his constant affection for me, the dismay and affliction which I suffered and still do suffer under this irreparable loss, by being absorbed in individual feelings, renders me callous or insensible to those of a public nature. Yet the idea is dreadful ! the sun is indeed set, and what can now follow but the blackest night ?

I am resolved to recollect and write down many things which I heard Mr. Pitt say, in the course of this journal. Nothing fell from his lips without its weight !

*Jan. 24th.*—Lord Melville breakfasted with me this morning on his return to Bath. He embraced me with tears and for some time could not speak. We at last expatiated on the dreadful calamity which we and the Country had sustained. I never witnessed grief more poignant ; he almost wished a general apathy to come upon him as the only relief ; and declared that if he lived a hundred years it would be impossible to remain an hour without the image of Mr. Pitt in his mind. He was glad to hasten out of the house whose every object recalled him : indeed when I recollect that at the very table at which I write I have seen him (and how seen him !) a thousand times, the bitterness of grief is past endurance.

Lord Aberdeen was impatient to take his seat in Parliament. The English peerage which he had

been promised was no longer attainable. Was it impossible that he should obtain a seat in the House of Commons? Peers, though disqualified from voting at other elections, were accustomed to do so freely at those of members for the Universities. Lord Aberdeen contended that, not being a Peer of Parliament, he must be qualified to represent a constituency in which he was qualified to vote, and he proposed to offer himself as a candidate for the seat vacated by Mr. Pitt.

## JOURNAL CONTINUED

*Jan. 24th.*—I received a letter from Petty<sup>1</sup> informing me of his intention of offering himself as a Candidate for the University of Cambridge and requesting my vote. In answer I informed him that if I possessed a vote the same qualifications would probably enable me to offer myself, which in that case I certainly should do; and in consequence have despatched a servant to Cambridge in order to ascertain this point—I fear without much success.

*25th.*—To-day rumours are frequent and various about the ministerial arrangements. I fear Lord Sidmouth may again be restored. If any of the opposition are called in it would be the only thing to satisfy the King. Binning<sup>2</sup> came to dinner—he says that he heard from Lord Blandford that a meeting of Mr. Pitt's nearest friends had been held, and they had come to a resolution never to accept an office under Lord Sidmouth. At the same time he says it is confidently reported that Lord Hawkesbury is to be the first Lord of the Treasury, and Castlereagh

<sup>1</sup> Lord Henry Petty, afterwards Marquess of Lansdowne, 1780-1863.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hamilton, 1780-1858. Eldest son and successor of Charles, eighth Earl of Haddington. Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1834-35; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1841-46; Lord Privy Seal, 1846. One of Lord Aberdeen's oldest and most constant friends.



Chancellor of the Exchequer. The latter went down to the House to-day and informed them that His Majesty was employed in forming a new administration.

*Jan. 26th.*—My express returned from Cambridge this morning and brought me the good wishes of the University, and regrets, which I really believe to be sincere, at my inability to offer myself. Dr. Turner, Mr. Pitt's old Master, and now Vice-Chancellor, sent in particular to say that I should have had his cordial support. Had it been possible there is no reason to doubt of my success.

*27th.*—I attended the House of Commons to hear the debate on the motion of Mr. Lascelles<sup>1</sup> for a public funeral and monument to Mr. Pitt. Windham, to his eternal disgrace, opposed it in a bad speech, full of quibbles and nice distinctions. He was well answered by R. Ryder. Fox was moderate: Castle-reagh spoke well. The motion was carried by 258 to 89. In the course of his speech Fox signified that he should probably be soon in power.

*28th.*—Nothing accurate has transpired respecting the new administration. The King would have done anything to keep the present Ministers in their places, and at one time it was settled they should remain. But on mature consideration they determined, I think on the whole wisely, to resign. When the King received the news of Mr. Pitt's death he said several times "This is my death's blow," and appeared much affected. The Duke of Cambridge, who accompanied the Duke of York at the time, told this to Lord Abercorn. Mr. Pitt, among the last words he uttered, exclaimed, "Oh! my country." Anxiety certainly killed him; he was anxious beyond

<sup>1</sup> Henry Lascelles, 1767–1841. Succeeded his father as second Earl of Harewood, 1820.

measure to meet Parliament, in the discussion of the Treaties.

This is my birthday; my prospects are miserably changed since last year. Lord Melville, and Mr. Pitt, my only friends, both gone. Had Mr. P. lived I should certainly in the course of the summer have got my English Peerage, as he promised Lord Melville I should be the first created. I must now depend on myself, but I am determined never to renounce the principles Mr. Pitt has taught me, or to become dependant on Government. I pray God to grant me abilities and honour to steer through all difficulties.

FROM LADY MELVILLE <sup>1</sup>

*Bath, Jan. 29, 1806.*

MY DEAR ABERDEEN,

Whatever it may cost me to exert myself enough to take up my pen, I cannot delay thanking you: if I had ever entertained the least doubt of the goodness of your feelings and the soundness of your principles, that Letter would have removed it all, but as further confirmation and pledge of what I on all occasions of deep importance look for from you, it was most welcome to me and among the very few things that have given me any pleasure for some time past. I agree perfectly with you in feeling the immediate power of God in this severe affliction, and it is not the first time in my life that I have had cause to be thankful "for the hope that is in me." To me in every way this misfortune has been dreadful, for Lord Melville's sufferings have been such as I never witnessed before—this loss of sleep alarming and the constant agitation of his mind such as made all medicine ineffectual. He is more composed now

<sup>1</sup> Lady Jane Hope, daughter of James, third Earl of Hopetoun.

and slept more last night, and I am just going out for the first time these six days. God bless you, my dear Aberdeen, a thousand times—we drank your health with every affectionate wish yesterday and I am afraid Alicia <sup>1</sup> made all the servants get drunk for your sake. Give my love to Lady Aberdeen, and believe yours most affectionately,

J. MELVILLE.

Lord M.'s love to you. He read your letter, and asked for it a second time. It is a great comfort to us that you keep possession of dear old Wimbledon, if it is not more for our sakes than your own or Lady A.'s.

LORD ABERDEEN TO THE REV. G. WHITTINGTON

*Berkeley Square, Monday.*

MY DEAR WHITTINGTON,

I will not enlarge on what I have experienced for the last ten days, but great as my distress has been, I have been obliged to console others; Lady Melville is in despair at the situation of Lord M. I who know the strength of his mind and of his nerves, am able to estimate the misery of his condition, when he declares that for the first time in his life he looks in vain for any resource within himself. We are come here for a few days, but mean very soon to return to Wimbledon. I am much more composed since I left it, for there every object tended to provoke grief. Being so near the spot where he lived my imagination pictured him before my eyes the whole night, and totally deprived me of sleep while I staid there.—I was present at the debate on his funeral, it was very satisfactory.

Now that I look more calmly on what is going on,

<sup>1</sup> Lord Aberdeen's only sister, Lady Alicia Gordon, 1787–1847.



I think the only thing to be done is what they are about to do, viz. to form an union of all Parties; and I really hope that the difficulties respecting the Duke of York which have occurred will not prevent any of the proposed arrangements.

I can write no more, but only to entreat you to come. We shall most likely be at Wimbledon, by the time you arrive, but if not, remember there is a bed here for you; I trust you will take possession of it accordingly.

In the meantime, believe me to be

Most affectionately yours,

ABERDEEN.

Remember me to Robinson,<sup>1</sup> whose letter I have got, and will answer, as soon as I can. I will with pleasure give Lord Hardwicke my vote for the office of High Steward.

#### LORD ABERDEEN'S JOURNAL

*London. 31st Jan.*—The King has certainly ordered Lord Grenville to prepare a list of an administration, and in consequence there will be a union of Lord Grenville's, Fox's, and Ld. Sidmouth's friends. This will be strong in talent and perhaps will be the best thing too.

*Feb. 2nd.*—A demur is said to have arisen in the formation of the new Government. Lord Grenville wished to render the office of Commander in Chief subject to the Cabinet; the King dreaded the censure or dismissal of the Duke of York, and has in consequence refused. Here the matter rests; there have been numerous conferences and long audiences granted to the Chancellor, Lord Hawkesbury, and the Duke

<sup>1</sup> Hon Frederick Robinson, afterwards Earl of Ripon, 1782-1859. For a short time (1827-28) Prime Minister.

of York. To-morrow will probably decide the arrangement.

*Feb. 4th.*—Everything is now arranged, the King having yielded; and the Duke of York is to act with a Council, and be controlled by the Cabinet. The Ministers will probably kiss hands to-morrow—there is certainly a very strong disposition in the House of Commons to dislike them.

Yesterday the motion for paying Mr. Pitt's debts was brought forward, and carried without a division, after some debate. The sum was stated at £40,000. Windham tried to recover himself from the effects produced by his speech on a former night, but in vain. The Business proceeded heavily, and the assent of the Opposition wore the appearance of a charitable grant, when Canning took it up in a very high tone, and was warmly supported by the House.

*8th.*—The Cambridge election is decided in favour of Petty by a vast majority.

*Feb. 9th.*—All the principal appointments are now made, although great difficulties and dissensions have occurred. In consequence of the unpopularity of the new Ministers, Addington's friends have been brought forward in order to secure the Government Boroughs, which were in their hands. Ld. Grenville is certainly weak in the Cabinet, which is thus composed.

Ld. Grenville.

Fox.

Ld. Spencer.

Grey.

Petty.

Ld. Sidmouth.

Ld. Fitzwilliam.

Ld. Ellenborough.

Windham.

*10th.*—I dined at the Duchess of Gordon's, where were the Duke of Bedford, Lauderdale, Sheridan, and Fitzpatrick. There was a good deal of conversation about a Minister for Scotland, which the Duchess



**THE TERRACE, HADDO HOUSE.**

From a photograph, showing the view from Drawing-room window, and of the Long Walk, a mile in length, leading up to the Memorial Urn erected by Lord Aberdeen; also showing a glimpse of the lake made by him.





loudly protested against; Lauderdale was very civil and gracious to me.

11th.—Lord Cassilis consulted me about the representation of the Scotch peerage, and showed me a list marked by the Prince, from whom I believe he was sent. I talked in general terms and told him I would answer to-morrow. Supped at Devonshire House with Lauderdale.

12th.—Returned a cautious answer to Lord Cassilis, being convinced his overtures were from a Cabal entirely in the Prince's interest.

13th.—Dined at Canning's—some conversation about the Addingtons. Someone remarking with surprize Lord Sidmouth's junction with Lord Grenville and Windham, who had always most violently opposed him, Canning replied "He is like the small pox and measles, everybody must have him *once*!"

15th.—Owing to the reports about the creation of Scotch Peers, I went to Lord Grenville and requested to know if there was any candidate in view for the vacancy in the representation. He informed me that the Peers so created would not vacate their seats as belonging to the sixteen. I took the occasion to say that I should offer myself at a general election—that I had been promised the first English Peerage by Mr. Pitt; that altho' that opportunity was past, it was impossible to relinquish the hope of attaining at some time or other so desirable an object—that in the prosecution of that object I should, as far as possible, be directed by the Spirit of Mr. Pitt's Policy; and that in talking so I trusted it was not to an enemy. He said, "Certainly not; no man can respect his memory more than myself."

18th.—Wm. Dundas<sup>1</sup> has turned out false to Mr. Pitt—at whose death he was the loudest in

<sup>1</sup> William Dundas, 1760-1845, Lord Clerk Register.

wishing the party to adhere to one another, but after a conference with Lord Stafford, he has declared that except where the character of Mr. Pitt was concerned, he would support the present Government.

Some man pressing Fox very much for a place, he replied, "To tell you the truth, we are already three in a bed."

*20th.*—I went to Bath to see Lord Melville, whom I found in better spirits than I expected, although still very low.

Attended the Debate in the House of Commons on the motion against the appointment of Lord Ellenborough to a seat in the Cabinet.—Canning made a most admirable speech in support of the motion, which called forth the exertions of Fox, whose speech also was admirable. In the Lords, when the question was brought forward by Lord Bristol, they did not divide, but in the Commons, although it had been previously determined that no division should take place, and in consequence many did not attend and others went away, yet Wortley foolishly divided the House—there was only a minority of 64 to 227.

I had much conversation with Castlereagh about the best line for opposition to take—we agreed that it was necessary to begin with moderation; but to meet frequently in order to keep together; for without violent measures in public something is necessary to cement the party out of the House.

*March. 11th.*—I dined at White's with Canning, C. Ellis, R. Dundas, Frere, etc. It was determined that we should have frequent dinners, and extend the nature of the Company as much as possible.

*19th.*—Lord Melville came to Town in order to give in his answer of not guilty to the additional article of impeachment preferred against him.

*26th.*—Heard the Debate in the H. of C. on the



Impeachment of Lord Melville being carried on in Westminster Hall or at the bar of the House of Lords—R. Dundas and Canning spoke well; if they had divided after Petty's speech, which was very feeble and injudicious, in all probability the point would have been gained; but by protracting the Debate Government received additional succour which rendered it hopeless; there was in consequence no division.

We dined afterwards at White's—in number about 25. Hawkesbury, Castlereagh, Canning, Ld. Abercorn, Rose, Sir H. Mildmay, etc.—Sat next Canning, who was remarkably pleasant.

27th.—A Grace for the purpose of erecting a Statue of Mr. Pitt in the Senate at Cambridge being thrown out of the Caput by a single dissentient voice, it was resolved to erect the same by voluntary subscription—I received a paper this morning.

I have heard Mr. Pitt say more than once that he had rather a single speech of Bolingbroke were preserved than all the lost books of Livy. He was fond of praising Lord B.'s style, which he has often told me he considered as the most perfect and desirable in the English language.

FROM SIR WILLIAM GELL <sup>1</sup>

*Cambridge, Dec. 1806.*

MY DEAR LORD ABERDEEN, Grand Duke of Athens, Cousin of Theseus, and intimate friend of Pericles—

I have heard that Nollekens, not Flaxman, is to execute the statue of Mr. Pitt if Canova cannot come to England. If that be the case I will thank you to send me some certain poison by return of post, as I am determined not to survive such a misfortune.

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. Gell, 1777-1836, the famous antiquary.

Of all the artists of England none but Flaxman have any taste for other statues than gold-laced coats and long-flapped waistcoats. Flaxman has really done all that could be done to acquire classical taste and real *Greek* knowledge—I have even doubts of Canova's superiority where copying is not allowed.

I shall be in town soon. In the meantime ever believe me yours most sincerely and affectionately,

W. GELL.

The correspondence which has been preserved at this period is chiefly that with the Marquis of Abercorn.

#### FROM LORD ABERCORN

*Wimbleton, Aug. 4, 1806.*

Lauderdale, you will hear, has gone to Paris, but I understand without any powers; and merely that Government might have a confidential person on the spot: this, it is said, has been rendered necessary by certain stockjobbing speculations of Lord Yarmouth's. As to Fox, the accounts are contradictory, but there is the best reason to believe that his complaint is worse; he has taken Foxglove.

Although you are probably better informed, I may as well mention that the reports of a dissolution in Parliament increase; and that it is said Lord Grenville has been left in a minority in the Cabinet on a late division.

In the autumn it was resolved that Lady Aberdeen should make acquaintance with her future home. The journey was a long one, and her condition of health made it a matter of anxiety. It was accomplished in easy stages, forty miles a day, and Lord Aberdeen in September was reporting on the condition of his larch plantations to Lord Abercorn. The answer

he received was in accord with the general impression as to the rigours of the climate and remoteness of Aberdeenshire.

## FROM LORD ABERCORN

*Priory, Sept. 1806.*

I am very sorry for your larch, for if they fail I fear nothing will succeed. But, in fact, I am quite convinced that though you will be right to go on fairly and very softly in gradual improvements, and occasional visits to Haddo, your time of Life, Habits, Tastes and everything make the balance overpoweringly against your considering it as a residence or scene of enjoyment, or *main* object. I am glad you are bored. I hope you will continue so. My main object is to have you fixed here again in as few weeks as may be.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

*Haddo, Sept. 27, 1806.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I hope you will sometimes come here and give me a great deal of advice about planting, water, etc., but I do not want you much at present, until some alterations are made, which perhaps, if you knew all, you might thank me for. We are threatened with a visit to-morrow or next day from the Duchess of Gordon and Huntly; others mean to pour in upon us, and with the Aberdeen meeting in perspective there will be no want of gaiety.

ABERDEEN.

## LADY ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

MY DEAR PAPA,

You need not believe one word of what Lord Aberdeen says about this place, for I can assure



you that there is nothing to complain of, I never was so surprised in my life as when I first saw it, for I had been told so much about it by everybody, that I expected a thing not fit for a human being to live in, placed in the middle of a barren, black moor, without a tree or anything near it but a bog; instead of that I saw a great many very good trees about the house, which is not regularly beautiful on the outside, but very comfortable in the inside, from the windows you see nothing but trees, and this fine weather it is as cheerful as possible. It is really very strange that everybody should have thought it so depressing; they said it was useless to do anything but build, for that we never could make it tolerable, but with a good chair and sofa or two, and new curtains to the drawing-room, I do not wish for anything better; and what do you think, I have got two little tame Fawns. As for the plantations here, they are just like those in Castle Rackrent. I have not perceived them yet, but I am told they will be magnificent ten years hence. (Note) Gentlemen who plant at the rate of one million trees per ann. cannot afford to put in very large and umbrageous machines.

Your affectionate daughter,

CATHARINE ABERDEEN.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

*Haddo, Sept. 10, 1808.*

The Spaniards have done nobly! If they acquire a few independent notions, which they will if the contest lasts, and the *vermin* are brushed off by its violence, all will be well—provided no British *objects* interfere. How superior they have appeared throughout to the Portuguese! These fellows by all accounts cannot much share in Sir Arthur's glory.

Oct. 13, 1806.

The news of Lauderdale's return has been received with the same joy here which it seems to have produced in London, and altogether in this country it is considered as the most popular act of the present Government.

ABERDEEN.

The prospect of the General Election recalled Lord Aberdeen from his estates, and he was soon immersed in the controversy which raged round the election of the Scottish Peers.

GENERAL ELECTION OF 1806

FROM LORD MELVILLE

*Tullibody, Oct. 24, 1806.*

MY DEAR ABERDEEN,

As you may believe, all hands are now at work in consequence of the Dissolution. I shall meet the Duke of Buccleugh this day at the Justice Clerk's, when of course we shall have conversation on the subject of the election of the peers, and it is really a complicated business, but the ground must be immediately and distinctly taken. Government always will and ought to keep a look out upon the election of the Scotch Peers, but without naming a person or suggesting Friendship or any other cause, Publick Principle or otherwise. It is I believe the first time the Scotch Peers were ever called upon to consider the support of a Government (especially a Government formed under such Circumstances, and as yet untried) as the only consideration which ought to weigh with them in their Choice, but of that time enough to talk hereafter. At present, I content myself with saying that I really think it will be necessary for you to come for a couple of days to

Edinburgh that we may concert and take a decided line for our interest in general and yours in particular.

MELVILLE.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

Nov. 28, 1806.

There will be meetings immediately after the Election about the condition of the Scots Peerage; Selkirk this morning went into a great detail respecting Lord Grenville's Plans, and his own views. It is proposed to place us in precisely the situation of the Irish Peerage, both as to sitting in the House of Commons and for life in the House of Lords. I reprobated *in toto* the idea of any change. You may write one word as to your opinion in this respect.

FROM THE MARQUESS OF ABERCORN<sup>1</sup>

Dec. 2, 1806.

MY DEAR ABERDEEN,

Though I have already written to you one letter to-day, I will write another to say in the most emphatical terms that I not only disapprove of, but abominate and abhor Lord Selkirk's base ideas about the Scottish Peerage.

Not only this either, but I shall protest even against the power of Parliament to alter the express terms of the Union;—explaining or modifying doubtful or undecided points or cases is a different matter. But to alter by a majority the actual terms and articles I contend to be a virtual dissolution of the Union.

It really puts me out of all patience to think of such a degradation of our Peerage as making Commoners of even those who would be base enough to make

<sup>1</sup> John James Hamilton, 1756–1818. 9th Earl of Abercorn, created Marquess 1790, Lord Aberdeen's father-in-law.







themselves so. I wish at any meeting you would say such are my sentiments. I am sure the Duke of Buccleugh and many others feel the same, and we could not too soon get as many as possible to promise to sign a remonstrance against any such measure.

One threat we might hold out "to engage never to give our votes for any Scottish Peer who should sign or petition to become a Commoner at will."

I think we may bully both them and ministers out of it.

Your affectionate,  
A.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD MELVILLE

*Dec. 21, 1806.*

MY DEAR LORD,

On the road I met with a letter from Lord Abercorn, saying that if the dissolution of Parliament was mentioned in the King's Speech, or Address, he should move an amendment, and begging me to be in time in case of a division. Nothing being said of it in the Speech or Address, no amendment was moved, but Hawkesbury spoke at considerable length; he chose most certainly a weak and bad ground, and laid himself open by a very injudicious speech to the attacks of Lord Grenville, which, it is but justice to say, were strong and successful. In the House of Commons, I hear that Canning was brilliant but not very wise, and that Lord Howick made one of the best speeches ever delivered by him in Parliament.

The Papers relating to the negotiation are shortly to be discussed, and I believe a case will be attempted to be made: I confess, however, that I see none; if you think there is any tenable ground, and will point it out, I should be much obliged to you.

Very many reports are in circulation; it is said



that the King, though in perfect health, is so oppressed and overcome by late events that he means to demand a Regency. His real sentiments with respect to Ministers it is difficult to ascertain; so long since as the last interview he had with the Duke of Portland, although they were long entirely in private, he never expressed any wish about Government being supported, or mentioned anything on the subject. He repeated several times to the Duke, "I believe, my Lord, you do not find my memory at all impaired," and on being answered, "Not in the least," he rejoined, "Perhaps it would be better if it were." The notion of this alluding to a Regency is much too chimerical, and at that time there was no particular cause for any depression of his spirits; I suppose he more probably hinted at Ministers, and I understand this is certainly the Duke of Portland's impression.

From what you know of the subject, do you think the interference of the Government in the Peers Election can possibly be brought forward in the House of Lords, as Lord Abercorn is particularly anxious to do it? I hear there are forty petitions in the House of Commons. Sheridan, it is said, means to take Chiltern Hundreds, as he dares not stand a scrutiny. Plumer is employed against him; he says that if the facts can be proved, it is the strongest case of the kind, which ever came before Parliament. It is not merely bribery of which he is accused, but subornation of Perjury, viz. : giving a man a guinea for his vote, and then, if he would vote a second time, two guineas, and so on in proportion.

FROM LORD MELVILLE.

*Dunira, Dec. 28, 1806.*

DEAR ABERDEEN,

I have yours of the 21st. The Delineation you give of what has been passing in Parliament

and the effects of the Speeches correspond entirely with what I conjectured on the Perusal of them. Canning had better have made the speech without the Motion, for making it and not dividing upon it, at the opening of Parliament, was too obvious an acknowledgement of a conscious Weakness.

I hope some of my Friends will send down to me the Papers produced on the subject of the Negotiation. There is no forming any opinion on the Final Result when they come in the detached and unconnected Manner they are given in the Newspapers. Without these Papers I am really incompetent to give you any suggestions such as you wish. I think it probable that there will be no strong case against Government. The Points to be particularly watched in the Perusal of the Papers, are, 1stly, whether the King's Ministers were sufficiently attentive, when they came into power, not to lose any of the ground in point of cordiality and connexion established with Russia. 2ndly, whether they were or were not too fervent in their advances for Peace, when it was scarcely possible that under the relative circumstances of the two countries any peace could be beneficially negotiated. 3rdly, if sufficient pains were taken early enough to discover the growing animosities between France and Russia, and whether we were sufficiently quick in our Movements in consequence of the Discovery to put an end to our own quarrels with Russia, so as to enable us to act in common co-operation against France. 4thly, what assistance we offered to Prussia; and fifthly, whether the terms which came under Discussion and which we were willing to adopt were such as were compatible with the Honour, the Safety and the Pretensions of this Country.

I imagine that under these heads may be classed all the material points to be attended to in the

investigation of the merits or demerits of Government as detailed in the Papers which have been produced, and according as one or all of them can be answered negatively or affirmatively are they entitled to censure, or approbation.

As to the Sentiments of the King relative to his Ministers, I wish our Friends may not proceed on an error when they suppose that they enjoy to a great degree his Predilections in their favour. I think I have good grounds for what I say. To adopt the present Administration was a most bitter Pill for him to swallow, but are our Friends aware that the very circumstance of its being so may have left a coldness towards them in the affections of the King, from an Idea that they ought to have stood by him and not left him at that time? I am not saying that they could have stood their ground at that time against the general Cry of the Country for a strong Government, and therefore the feelings of the King may be unreasonable in that respect, but still if they exist it is of no moment whether they are well or ill founded. I think the Circumstances which have since occurred are a strong corroboration of my Belief on this subject. If a strong predilection existed in favour of the former Ministers it would have broke out at the time of Mr. Fox's death, and his yielding to his present Ministers the Dissolution of Parliament when he must have been perfectly aware of the consequences, is in my judgment an irresistible Proof, that if our Friends have been speculating on any supposed anxiety in the breast of the King to resort to his former Ministers, they are proceeding on an error. I am afraid the real state of the King's Mind is an apathy as to all Publick Men and Measures, and when you hear from those about him of his Calmness and Firmness and good Health, etc., etc., it is only a corroborative proof of that apathy.



If my information is just, I believe that the exertions and Violence and corrupt influence of Government has been more notorious both as to Peers and Commoners-elections than was ever known, but I do not see daylight through any Proposition that could be brought forward on the Subject. One may know the Truth from various channels, but it is difficult to authenticate anything in such a way as to produce consequences.

I remain, my dear Aberdeen,

Yours very affectionately,

MELVILLE.

FROM THE REV. G. WHITTINGTON

March 25, 1807.

I hope a dissolution will not be necessary. I should think after the thousands paid, the *papers* would be ready to support the Ministers rather than incur a new expense. Sheridan's remark is excellent. Erskine communicated his fall to his son at Trinity, precisely in these words (Bernard saw the letter)—“My dear Bob, this damned Catholic Bill has ruined us all, etc.,” which may pair off with Mr. Keogh's being “a damned blackguard.”

LORD ABERDEEN TO THE REV. G. WHITTINGTON

MY DEAR W.,

I received your letter this morning. Lord Melville, I fear, is resolute in his intention of not returning to office, which is doubtless a great loss. Lord Wellesley had accepted the seals of the Foreign Office, but in consideration of his peculiar situation, it is postponed. With regard to a dissolution, only one thing is determined, viz. not to hesitate a moment if it shall be rendered necessary, which I think may probably be the case. The Vote, however, of last

night, will not, I apprehend, hasten it. Lord Abercorn has refused Ireland. Respecting myself, I am offered the Russian Embassy; it being determined that Ld. Douglas is to return. This, you must allow, is arduous, and I think I should prefer a mission of less importance. Unfortunately Constantinople, which I should like better than any place in Europe, is now shut up. But all this is matter for mature deliberation; and as I write in confidence you will of course not mention the circumstances to anyone whatever.

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL  
ELECTION OF 1807

LORD ABERDEEN TO THE REV. G. WHITTINGTON

*Old Burlington St., March 21, 1807.*

MY DEAR W.,

I should long before this time have explained to you the state of affairs here, had I not as you may suppose been tolerably anxious, and indeed until very lately nothing was finally determined. The only thing which is now absolutely settled is, the dismissal of the *whole* administration, not excepting the Doctor. The Duke of Portland will it is certain be first Lord of the Treasury. Ld. Melville probably, although he does not like any office, will go to the Admiralty. I believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer is to be Castlereagh. And the Foreign Home and War Secretaries, Canning, Hawkesbury and Yorke (it is said, however, the Hardwickses are false). I presume Grant will be Chancellor, and Perceval Master of the Rolls, Ld. Eldon Prest. of Council. The immediate cause of all this, although arising out of the Catholic Question, is very different from what you have detailed in the Papers. They have made a shameful attempt to Bully the King, whose case is very good. He has

shown much spirit and good determination: the Ministers are surprised beyond measure, never having conceived it possible for the King to resist them. Sheridan says he has heard of people dashing their heads against a stone wall, but never of anyone before who built one for that purpose. It is hoped there will be no occasion for a dissolution, but if there should be it is determined to appeal to the people. I think the Government will be good and well-formed—I cannot, however, say that it will make any difference to me, except giving me a seat on the fire side of the House of Lords instead of the cold opposition Bench.

Believe me yours most truly,  
ABERDEEN.

VISCOUNTESS MELVILLE TO LORD ABERDEEN

*March 24, 1807.*

MY DEAR A.,

Lord Melville went to Town this morning and being now about half-past four, I must await his arrival, and should do no good by forwarding your letter to him, as it might miss him. Whatever it contains, I see in your writing it your dear, kind and anxious concern upon the subject, but in consequence of a letter Lord Melville received this morning from his son, my mind is much more made up than it was yesterday, and I own I think that when his own son discourages his return to office I can only consider the die as cast, and new as the whole position seems to me I must accommodate my language and appearance to it as well as I can. I see the necessity of strict prudence, and shall only when we meet next tell you the reflections I make upon the whole subject. Lord Melville (when I saw him last) remained perfectly satisfied with his own choice and I believe nothing



has passed to make him regret that he made it. I heard in confidence that Lord Wellesley will be at the head of foreign affairs, and that Mr. Perceval will accept the place of Chancellor of the Exchequer. I never asked yesterday if you would like to go to Russia on the recall of Lord Douglas? Be very guarded, my dear Aberdeen, in what language you hold about Lord Melville. It will be, I find, most necessary.

FROM VISCOUNT MELVILLE

*Wimbledon, March 25.*

MY DEAR ABERDEEN,

I received your letter yesterday on my arrival from town where I had gone for a few hours. There is no misapprehension anywhere, you may be assured. My Reluctance to return to Office is unvaried and invariable, and that Reluctance could yield to nothing but the King's commands originating in a conviction that my being a member of his Government was essential to its Strength. Recent circumstances have confirmed me that there is no such feeling in the minds of those who are to fill the most essential parts of the new Government. I am determined never to have any reserve with you on any Subject, and therefore I will explain to you what I mean the first time we meet.

In the spring of 1807 it was proposed to Lord Aberdeen that he should be appointed British Minister to Sicily, at that moment a post of much importance. Mr. Canning wrote to him on the 27th April that "the question of your succession to Mr. Drummond is merely a matter of time, and depends upon circumstances which had not occurred when first I communicated with Lord Melville, but which I will explain to you whenever I see you. Your



**HADDO HOUSE.**

From a photograph taken about 1860.





succession to Mr. D. when he comes home I consider as fixed, on my part at least, and subject only to your own decision." Drummond, who was then an Ambassador in Sicily, wrote to him at some length on the condition of affairs, which made his post of considerable importance. Lord Aberdeen declined the post, unless allowed the same control over the Sicilian Government which had till then been exercised by the British Ambassador, but which it had been decided to discontinue. The Mission was refused on these grounds, but perhaps what at this time weighed with him was the strong opposition of Lord Abercorn. Lord Aberdeen yielded to it, "somewhat against his better judgment." He was anxious for work which took him into public life. Had Mr. Pitt lived, and Lord Melville remained in power, he would have had no need for any anxiety as to early promotion to high office.

At the first dissolution of Parliament which followed his attaining his majority in 1801 he was elected one of the sixteen representative Peers of Scotland, and in 1808 at the age of twenty-four he received the Order of the Thistle.

In the following year he refused the Embassy to Russia, an offer which speaks highly of the estimation in which he was held. Had he accepted it, the attitude in which he approached the subject of the Crimean War forty-five years later might have been considerably modified. Nor was he only regarded as a man likely to be conspicuous in public life. He received yet more consideration from his knowledge and his literary culture. The excavator of the Pnyx was soon elected to the Presidency of the Society of Antiquaries. He became a Trustee of the British Museum, and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

He wrote in the *Edinburgh Review*, and though not a frequent speaker in the House of Lords, he took part in all the more intimate consultations, out of Parliament, of the friends who had formed Mr. Pitt's party.

It is evident that in these years his attention was engrossed at first by the complete happiness of his domestic life. He and Lady Aberdeen were frequently in residence at Haddo, and the improvements effected in the house and on the estate form the absorbing topic of correspondence. Lord Abercorn always entertained the view that Aberdeenshire was somewhere within the Arctic Circle, and he was never at ease till his daughter returned to the South. A friendly rivalry in forestry existed between him and his son-in-law. It is admitted the growth of trees at Baronscourt may be favourably affected by the greater damp, but in 1808 Lord Abercorn writes: "I annex a list of trees planted from my own nursery since the 1st of January last. Nearly an equal number were planted in the autumn preceding. In twenty years if no wood is to be found, it will not be my fault. Larch 195,000, Scotch Fir 444,000, Oak 10,200."

A somewhat sombre answer is returned to Lord Abercorn's advice on improving the soil:

*Haddo, July 30, 1808.*

It has cost, for a considerable extent near Aberdeen, to clear level ground of *stones* (not rocks) no less than a hundred pounds per acre. It would cost four times the amount to clear my hills.

The happiness of his home life was completed by the birth of three daughters—Jane, Caroline and Alice, the first born in 1807 and the others in the two following years. A son born in 1810 survived his birth only a few hours. In that year Lady Aberdeen, always with a constitutional weakness, began to fail, and after a long illness, during which Lord Aberdeen watched and nursed her with the tenderest care, she died on the 29th February 1812. The daughters inherited the same constitutional tendency, and none of them passed the age of girlhood. Lord Aberdeen, the most devoted and tenderest of fathers, saw them

pass one after another, from his love and the circle of his home.

With the death of his wife, Catharine Hamilton, his son says, "the sunshine went out of his life for ever. From the day of her funeral to that of his own death, nearly fifty years later, he constantly wore mourning for her."

In 1809, writing to a friend, he says :

Depend on it, true solid happiness is not tasted till a man is settled quietly with his wife. This does not appear orthodox, but *experto crede*. I think the twentieth year of a man's marriage ought to be happier than the first.

After her death, when he was again contemplating marriage, writing to his sister-in-law, Lady Maria Hamilton, in whose intimacy and affection he much delighted, in speaking of his past happiness he says :

Most undoubtedly, as long as I live, I shall believe that I have seen human nature under a form in which it never before existed. My heart must be more than metaphorically cold before this feeling can ever be changed or forgotten.

He was now less disinclined than before to accept employment abroad, and Lord Abercorn had not the same reasons for urging his remaining at home. Once more he was to refuse a mission. He declined to go to the United States when it was offered him in 1812. What effect his conciliatory character might have had in averting the war which followed must remain a subject for speculation. He had not yet received the call to take the active part in foreign affairs which was to be his work for the following years, but his interest in all that belonged to the affairs of his country on the Continent was constantly in his mind.

Hudson Gurney asked his opinion as to the progress



of events in Sicily in October 1812, and to him he replied with the faith that was his at that date :

You ask about Sicily; some of the things that have been done appear to me clearly good, but others are rather doubtful. To talk of "Giving the British Constitution" as such is quite nonsense. You must first create the people, the state of society, the whole system by which the British Constitution is kept alive. Give the people more liberty as you see they are fit for it : break the power of the nobles; destroy commercial monopoly; introduce justice in taxation; banish venality and corruption from the judicature, all by specific measures, as fast as you please; but to give them a fine-sounding name will not carry much real good along with it. The thing, if anything is meant by it, must be greatly modified, and by talking of it difficulties are only created which need never have been heard of.

## CHAPTER III

### EMBASSY TO THE ALLIES (1813-1814)

“ It is probable that after the Duke of Wellington no British Statesman or soldier so largely influenced the successful issue of the great struggle for the freedom of Europe in 1813 as Lord Aberdeen.”—*Edinburgh Review*, 1858-59.

#### TO THE MARQUESS OF ABERCORN

*Argyll House, May 3, 1813.*

THERE is a great probability of a Mission to Vienna speedily taking place, and it has been proposed to me to accept it. If I go, it would certainly only be for a short time, not more than six months. I have really no wish to gratify; on the contrary, the predominant feeling of my mind is regret at the thoughts of leaving the children, and rather a disinclination to leave the country, joined to a feeling approaching contempt for the whole diplomatic profession in general. At the same time it appeared to me doubtful whether I should be justified in declining an employment certainly of considerable importance, and under circumstances not disagreeable.

*Haddo, July 16, 1813.*

At length a letter has arrived from Castlereagh which makes it necessary for me to go to town immediately. It is probable that I shall now be obliged to go, for the urgency of Castlereagh himself, as well as the entreaties of the other Ministers, are so great that it would be affectation to refuse. It is

intended that I should leave England privately, but in possession of ample powers. I conclude that Castlereagh entertained hopes of my going from what I said to him formerly on the subject of pecuniary aid; this, I understand, he has at length found means to offer.

The two points on which I intend to insist are : first, whatever may be my nominal diplomatic rank, if any, I must be on a footing of perfect equality with Lord Cathcart, or any Ambassador whatever. Second, in the event of a Congress, I must be on a footing of perfect equality with any English negotiator with whom I may be joined. I think this will be sufficient, with the understanding that I may come home at any moment I think fit, and that at all events my stay shall not be prolonged beyond a very few months but at my own express desire.

Lord Aberdeen had declined to accept the Embassy if means were not found to assist Austria either by men or money in the event of her declaring war on France.

Lord Abercorn replied :

Only that it may be a good thing, both for you and for the Country, I should be heartily sorry to lose the autumn and winter prospect I looked forward to.

You are perfectly right stipulating to be *Nulli Secundus* in any scene or transaction of your Embassy. I hope, too, you will have stipulated to have some specific, defined and definitive object, end and powers, so that neither can you be left in the lurch at home, nor those that trust to you abroad.

I do indeed wish that I were within reach before you start. As that wish is vain, I will hazard only two wise opinions, the first more intelligently to be expressed than the second.



An undisguised personal and national haughtiness (with a sweet sauce of studied, unremitting, ceremonious, condescending politeness and attention) is much more advantageous than is supposed or guessed. Much more is lost than gained by manœuvring and going round about, and pretending to insist upon more than the real object, for fear of getting less. And no species of negotiation is so liable to be deceived and taken in, as that which affects to penetrate and draw inferences from the mind and manner of the other negotiator. But an Ambassador with an established character of straightforwardness, of never receding, himself, from his real purpose, and disdaining to cajole or be cajoled, would nine times in ten succeed. How long it might take to establish such a character is another point. That system has not been so often tried as the other. Will you forgive this foolish bit of prose.

The instructions given to Lord Aberdeen were of a very general nature, and left him a wide discretion. He was told that in the opinion of the British Government the conditions of a general peace ought to confine France at least within the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Rhine. If, however, the Powers most immediately interested should prefer a more imperfect arrangement to the risks of a more protracted struggle, England would not dictate to other States a perseverance in war not essential to their own safety, and was prepared to lend herself to such a policy on certain conditions. The English Government could not in any circumstances be parties to a peace which did not secure Spain, Portugal and Sicily to their respective Sovereigns, or fulfil the existing engagements of Great Britain to Sweden. Secondly, without laying down definite details, the British Government desired to establish some counterpoise in the centre of Europe to the power of France, and

would be ready to co-operate in the re-establishment of an independent power in Holland. The restoration of Hanover was also to be effected. Lord Aberdeen was also authorised to promote insurrections against the French in the Tyrol and Northern Italy, and to sign in conjunction with Austria a Treaty with Murat, guaranteeing to him, as the price of active operation against Bonaparte, an indemnity elsewhere in Italy, should Naples be restored to the King of Sicily.

In a secret despatch he was given power, if Murat's assistance could not otherwise be obtained, to confirm him in the possession of the Kingdom of Naples, and to provide an indemnity to the King of Sicily.

His anticipations were not very sanguine. In a letter to Lady Maria Hamilton he says :

For myself, I go to certain vexation, and, from all that I can learn, probable disappointment. Things are not so well as they were some time ago. The feebleness of the Austrian Government is dreadful, and I am too late. But I will do my best and act honestly where little honesty has been seen ; I pray God may protect my endeavours. Frederick Lamb<sup>1</sup> goes with me as secretary of Embassy, D. Morier<sup>2</sup> as my private secretary, and Robert will be attached to me.

The despatch goes on to say :

In weighing what may be due on the part of the great Continental Powers to their own immediate security, none is so much interested as Austria in adequately providing, under the present circumstances, for the general safety, as that Power, notwithstanding her family connection with the French ruler, is, both from position and from her recent line of policy, likely to become the first object of his future enterprise and resentment.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Lamb (1782-1853), third son of First Viscount Melbourne.

<sup>2</sup> David Morier (1784-1877), Consul-General in France 1815-1832.

Your Lordship will, in discussing this view of the subject with the Austrian Minister, strongly urge him to consider the singular concurrence of circumstances which are prepared at this moment to sustain the Austrian Monarchy against the power of France, and to restore it to its former station in Europe.

A powerful British army, combined with a Portuguese and Spanish force, amounting in the whole to not less than 90,000 men, are advanced to the Pyrenees, and menace France upon one of its most vulnerable frontiers. A numerous Russian army, animated by those successes which have proved so fatal to the enemy, is advancing to the very heart of Germany for the avowed purpose of delivering it from oppression. The ancient jealousy which divided the Courts of Vienna and Berlin is now apparently, for the first time, buried in a sense of common danger, and Prussia, the habitual rival of Austria, eager as a nation to unite herself to her former antagonist against the common enemy. If to all these novel and powerful elements of exertion be added the extraordinary feature of a large Swedish army actually arrived in the north of Germany and ready to act against Bonaparte, under the command of one of his own most celebrated Generals, and that another powerful army in the south of Italy, similarly commanded, may in all probability, if Austria moves, be brought against him. Surely then it is not too much to assert that such means have never before existed, so if the occasion is allowed to pass away without effectually turning them to the salvation of Europe, they may never again be placed within our reach.

If this view of our situation is important in the last degree to all nations, it is most peculiarly so to



Austria. Austria is in military strength and resource the most natural object of jealousy to France. She must latterly have incurred the heaviest share of criminality in the eyes of that Power, by emerging from a state of professed weakness to dictate terms to the very Power under whose influence she had submitted to act. She is also that Power which, in point of position, is most exposed to sudden attack, and most remote in such an event from succour. It is therefore more essential to Austria than to any other Power to turn the present means to her advantage, and this your Lordship will press.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON <sup>1</sup>

*Ystadt, Aug. 19, 1813.*

DEAREST LADY MARIA,

You will have heard from Lady Abercorn <sup>2</sup> of our safe arrival at Gottenburgh. Since we left that place we have travelled through Sweden, about 300 miles, and are now on the point of embarking for Rostock. At this town we have received the intelligence of Austria having joined the Allies; this relieves me of much difficulty, but much yet remains. However, from the prosperous appearance of affairs, I hope things will go on agreeably. I will not bother you with news, but write as a traveller.

This country is quite delightful,—it is most beautifully wooded, and the ground varied, as to form, in the most agreeable manner; cultivation is mingled with all the most romantic scenes, which produces an effect to me always peculiarly charming. The woods are chiefly Oak, Alder, Ash, Beech and Birch; there are also a good many fir trees growing naturally, but not in any great number. We crossed many

<sup>1</sup> Lady Maria Hamilton, Lord Abercorn's third daughter.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Aberdeen's sister-in-law, died in 1814.

fine streams; and altogether the country is not very unlike some of the richest parts of the Highlands, excepting the hills, which are small, and not of a particularly good form. The people, without exception, appear to be the best humoured I ever saw. In passing through a country so rapidly there is not time for much observation, but one cannot be deceived in the honest frankness of their appearance. We passed through no very good towns, but they are generally clean, and picturesque. At Helsinburgh we saw across the Sound, which is only three miles wide, the Castle of Cronberg, Elsinour, and Copenhagen at a distance. The roads are excellent, and we travelled fast; my carriage was drawn by half a dozen little long-tailed ponies that put one in mind of Cinderella and her *attelage*.

The Crown Prince appears to be very popular; and the journey of Moreau has excited the greatest sensation. He was received everywhere with the highest honours, and partly as a friend of the Prince, and as a General of such celebrity, the people were delighted with him. The meeting of Moreau and the Crown Prince was most satisfactory. I saw a letter from Moreau giving an account of it.

How I long to hear from you! I am sure you will write frequently; the dear children will now be at the Priory, and I force myself to think will go on well.

I am well contented with my fellow-travellers, but of course every step I take further from home is more and more disagreeable.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Breslau, Aug. 27, 1813.*

I must for the present abstain from writing not only as a politician, but even as a traveller, and confine myself to a simple account of my own

wanderings and adventures. I never expected to find this journey a party of pleasure; it has been still more disagreeable than I was prepared to find it.

I think I wrote to you from Ystadt on the 19th. No English vessel arriving, and impatient of delay, I embarked the same evening on board a Swedish Packet for Stralsund. It began to blow hard soon after we sailed, and during that night and the following day we experienced all the horrors of a gale of wind in the Baltic. The sea was very high, and the vessel laboured much; the noise and apparent confusion of the Captain and his crew, with their unintelligible language, did not render our situation more agreeable. On the whole, I was not unprepared for the termination of my mission, together with all the *hopes and fears* connected with it. However, on Friday evening we reached Stralsund, a wretched place, where we were obliged to remain until Saturday evening before we were able to begin our journey. We then set out, and, passing through Pomerania, on Sunday we arrived at Strelitz. Here we found the Landwehr in arms, and the highest spirit of resistance to the French; indeed, throughout the whole country from Stralsund to this place, the people are quite unanimous; nothing can exceed the enthusiasm of all ranks. At Strelitz we heard that the French were retiring, and that the Crown Prince was advancing to the Elbe. We continued our journey through a very beautiful country, and towards evening met with a different report, that the French were advancing towards Berlin, and that a battle was expected on that day. We were at some loss how to act, but determined to proceed, and on our approach to Berlin inquire into the real state of affairs. In the middle of the night we met a person travelling from Berlin, who assured us that



the French had certainly retreated, and that the Crown Prince had certainly advanced towards Wittenberg on the Elbe. We arrived at Berlin about seven o'clock on Monday morning. I had intended to take a few hours' rest, but observing even at that early hour some appearance of bustle and confusion in the town, I found on inquiry that the French army was really approaching. The scene of agitation and interest was soon at its height; the French army was ascertained to be about twelve or sixteen English miles from the town,—the Crown Prince had taken up his position near Potsdam,—an action was now momentarily expected,—the noise of cannon was heard,—nothing but estafettes arriving and departing,—officers galloping through the streets,—crowds of people collected in all the public places,—reports, true or false, spread and collected with equal avidity. I never before witnessed a scene of such powerful interest; it put me in mind of the state of Athens on the approach of Philip to Cheronea, as we have it described by the Greek orators. It became necessary for me to decide on the part I was to take :—Charles Stewart was at Prague, and none of the English mission in Berlin, so that it was difficult to get information and assistance. My road was through Frankfort on the Oder, but there had been skirmishing the day before within two or three miles of some of the villages in that direction. I wished very much to remain at Berlin until the fate of the city was decided by the battle about to be fought, and, indeed, then said to be begun; but if the event should have been unfavourable, my communication would have been entirely cut off from Frankfort. I called on General L'Estocq, the commandant of the town; he said, "I think you may now go in safety: to-morrow I will not answer for it." On pressing him

further, I found that he had not much hope of the town being saved. He reckoned the French army at a hundred thousand men at least, and the Crown Prince had not more than eighty thousand. Under these circumstances, however interesting, I thought further delay would scarcely be justifiable, and by the assistance of General L'Estocq I set out for Frankfort, where we arrived at two o'clock on Tuesday morning. We continued our journey along the Oder to Crossen, where the French had recently been;—our road during the night was through immense forests of pine and beech. This night we met with our first overturn; we were not materially hurt, although my head received a sort of concussion which makes light painful, and which has produced a headache which seems inclined to remain. On Wednesday, as we were congratulating ourselves on being fairly in the heart of Silesia, and safe from any marauding party of the French, especially as we heard they had received a check, we met the Austrian General Vincent, who was going on a mission to the Crown Prince : he told us that General Blucher “avait un petit desavantage, et qu'il s'étoit replié sur Breslau.” He advised us not to go to Breslau, but to make a detour. This was keeping us in hot water, but, however, we determined to proceed. The French had been within three miles of one place where we changed horses, and had burnt two villages. Most fortunately a corps of Austrians crossed the Bohemian frontier, and entered Silesia in their rear, which has obliged them to retreat.

We arrived at this place last night, and for the first time have gone to bed, being completely worn out. I shall continue my journey this morning, and proceed with the utmost expedition to the Imperial Headquarters, where I am most impatiently expected,



and where, from what I hear, my presence is very necessary. I am delayed two or three hours by the Prince of Prussia, who is here, wishing to see me before my departure. I shall take this letter with me, and shall not finish it until I have an opportunity of sending it by an English messenger.

On the whole everything is going on well. I am ignorant of the fate of Berlin, but it cannot affect the general cause. This patriotic spirit in Germany is quite new, and must produce the best results.

This is a singular town—very picturesque; with an Italian appearance about it,—rather going to decay. The country fertile, but flat;—generally speaking, the whole country we have passed through from Stralsund has been flat and sandy—full of very fine woods, especially fir. By far the prettiest country we have as yet seen is in the neighbourhood of Strelitz. The ground well diversified, and the woods of every sort in great luxuriance.

Lamb<sup>1</sup> and I travel together—we found it absolutely necessary to divide, as we require twenty-four horses to move the whole party. They were to leave Berlin two hours after us; they have not yet come up, but most likely they have slept on the road, as some of them did not much admire the fatigue, although they were all well. Lamb is rather an agreeable companion, he is more cultivated than I had given him credit for, he has a good deal of cleverness, and I confess myself to be most agreeably surprised as to the nature of his opinions and general character, so far as they appear.

*Prague, Sept. 1.*

I continue the account of my journey, but first I must congratulate you on the safety of Berlin, which

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Lamb, son of first Lord Melbourne. Lord Beauvale, 1839, succeeded his brother as 2nd Viscount Melbourne, 1848.



the Prussian Corps under the command of the Crown Prince has for the present secured. I only arrived at this place yesterday, having travelled day and night since I wrote from Breslau. We came through Glatz, Koniginstadt, and Brandias. The roads were worse than ever, having been entirely destroyed by the passage of Russian Troops, Artillery, etc. One night we were overturned, and had to stand in the rain for four hours before any assistance could be procured, which at last was very unwillingly afforded; we had then to sit in our wet things in the carriage for the rest of the night. We have more than once spent the day without other food than some dry bread. In short, our distresses may not be very poetical, or read well on paper, but I assure you they are very serious in reality. The country is very beautiful on the frontiers of Silesia and Bohemia; mountainous, with a great profusion of wood, and many fine streams. In Silesia we saw many reinforcements on their way to join the Russian army; large bodies of Cossacks; but what astonished us more than anything was a body of several hundred Asiatic Tartars, armed with bows and arrows, and carrying a light spear. Their equipment altogether was most strange. They have the Chinese face, and are exactly like the fellows one sees painted on tea-boxes.

You will have heard of the failure of the Allies in the attack on Dresden; but yesterday news arrived of a complete victory gained over Vandamme, whose corps is cut to pieces and himself prisoner. Our real difficulties are only beginning. The Emperor of Austria is either at Lann or Teplitz. He and Metternich have been sleeping on straw. As I left London unprovided with everything, I cannot expect to fare well. Nothing is to be had or done in this

town, which is in a state of confusion not to be described. I set out to-night to join the Emperor.

Hopes are entertained that poor Moreau will recover. I shall still carry on this letter with me, as there are no means at present of sending to England.

*Teplitz, Sept. 4.*

Poor Moreau is dead. It has created a great sensation. I dined yesterday in company with the Surgeon of the Emperor of Russia, who cut off both of Moreau's legs. They were taken off high above the knees. Nothing could be more heroic than his conduct throughout. The account of the whole business was most affecting. For simple heroism without any trick or acting I have never heard anything superior.

We have been here these two days. It is a small town, and you may imagine how it is filled, when the two Emperors are here, the King of Prussia also, and a dozen Princes, with the staff of all the armies. We have a wretched quarter in the same house with the Prince of Oldenburgh. I have seen Metternich, and like him very much. But the difficulty and importance of my negotiations increase at every step. Cathcart and Stewart are here—the latter, you will have heard, received a contusion in the late action. It is not serious, but it will be three weeks or a month before he can ride. He is going to join the Crown Prince. I am truly sorry for it, as he is a person whose opinion on things connected with military movements would be of the greatest service. I think his views in general are most just.

The near approach of war and its effects are horrible beyond what you can conceive. The whole road from Prague to this place was covered with waggons full of wounded, dead and dying. The shock, and

disgust, and pity produced by such scenes are beyond what I could have supposed possible at a distance. There are near two hundred thousand men round this town. There is much splendour, and much animation in the sight, yet the scenes of distress and misery have sunk deeper in my mind. I have been quite haunted by them. I continue pretty well, as do all my party.

If I have time I will write to Lady Abercorn. God bless you, dearest Lady Maria. Take care of the dear children.

*September 6.*

I now finally close my letter. I have seen the Emperor, and have been received as Ambassador. In an audience of considerable length I have had every reason to be satisfied with him.

#### LORD CASTLEREAGH TO LORD ABERDEEN

*St. James's Square, Sept. 1, 1813, at night.*

We have received the Austrian declaration, but shall not publish it, as we found it was not to appear at Prague till the 17th. Napoleon seems for once to have been out-negotiated; he speculated upon Metternich as he did upon Romanzow, and we have only to hope that the parallel may be complete. Until all chance of further pourparlers are extinguished in the din of war, I do not send you on official instructions, but as the conduct of Austria is strongly felt and approved, you may consider yourself as authorised to express the deep impression it has made upon the Prince Regent and his Ministers. The Emperor's autographic instruction to Count Metternich does him great honour,—it is everything the occasion required,—and the Austrian Minister, by the loyal and dignified manner in which he has



wound up the drama at Prague, has placed himself and his master on high ground. Offer my congratulations to Count Metternich on the dignity and firmness with which he has conducted these delicate and important transactions to a close, which, in affording to Europe and to the Allies a pledge of the truth and honour which actuated him throughout, has given to his Sovereign and to his country irresistible claims to confidence and support.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Sept. 6, 1813.*

Having been received as Ambassador, I wish you would now have me gazetted; and if the thing can be done in my absence, I hope you will have no objection to have me nominated one of the Privy Council; the appointment being usual on these occasions.

I fear, however, that all my dignities will not render this kind of life much more agreeable. The privations and sufferings of following Headquarters are nearly as great as in a military life, but without any credit to be obtained. The Emperor seems to think it necessary to follow the example of the other Sovereigns and keep near his army; in the execution of this determination he has already been obliged to sleep upon straw; what else he may do I know not.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH (Private)

*Teplitz, Sept. 7, 1813.*

I shall not trouble you with details of Military measures, which you will receive from others, and which others are much better qualified to give; but there are some questions which, although partaking of a Military nature, are so important in their political results as to force themselves on the notice of the most ignorant person.

It is quite impossible to view the state of the fine army by which we are surrounded, with reference to the manner in which it is directed, without the most lively concern and apprehension. The evils of a divided command are everywhere apparent. Prince Schwartzberg, after much difficulty and discussion, having been appointed Commander-in-Chief, is, after all, placed in a situation in which he is invested with scarcely more than nominal authority. Of the merits and claims of Schwartzberg I know nothing, although Stewart seems to think favourably of them, but I am quite sure that no Commander on earth would prove efficient in the situation in which he is placed. The vigour of every measure is paralysed, the wisdom of every proposition is almost rendered abortive, by the delay which is necessary to procure the approbation of the different Sovereigns and their advisers. The movement made yesterday morning by the greater part of the Austrian army towards Silesia, intended to support Blücher by acting on the right flank of Bonaparte, in which it is obvious that every hour is of the utmost importance, would have been undertaken eight-and-forty hours sooner, had it not been for the difficulty of persuading the Emperor Alexander to agree to the measure. The mutual discontent and ill-will existing in the different armies, which have been increased by the early operations of the campaign, have arrived at a considerable height; and when at last the Austrians marched separately yesterday morning, it was with a joy and acclamation as if they had obtained a victory. A circumstance which has produced a great effect among the Austrians is the Emperor Alexander having conferred the great cross of the Order of St. George on Barclay de Tolly,—an Order only given to Generals who have gained the most

splendid victories,—which he does not wear himself,—and which he has never given before, but to Kutusow. What renders this offensive to the Austrians, is that Barclay de Tolly, in one of the affairs before Dresden, refused to obey the positive orders of Schwartzenberg repeatedly given.

It is evident that this state of things cannot long continue without ruin to the general cause: it remains to be seen how it may best be remedied. The Emperor Alexander, with an affected indifference on the subject, is actively employed to *briguer* the chief command. If the Austrians could be brought to consent to this, perhaps it would be the best arrangement: Stewart is of this opinion, and he is probably right. The next best expedient would be for the Sovereigns to withdraw from the armies, and leave the real command of the troops either in the hands of Schwartzenberg or anyone else. Cathcart thinks that this would be destruction to the general cause, and that the departure of the Emperor Alexander would shortly precede the dissolution of all our hopes; I see no very good ground for this opinion, but it is not likely to be put to the test, as there is no probability that the Emperor Alexander would ever consent to it. The only remaining plan is that which has been virtually adopted—a separation of the forces. They will now, I believe, act independently, except when their union is absolutely and indispensably necessary. Schwartzenberg himself goes with the Austrians. The favourite project of the Austrians, after the present movement has been completed, is an advance to the French frontier by the way of Wurtemberg, and bearing down towards Bavaria. The Russians desire to make every exertion in Saxony. It is not difficult to conjecture the motives which influence the wishes of the two



countries.—I should mention that there appears to be some hope of Bavaria. Metternich has said nothing to me on the subject; but Gentz,<sup>1</sup> who is now much in his confidence, told me they had the best reason for believing that not only the Hereditary Prince, but the King himself, and Mongelas, were not unfavourable to their cause. They will probably be guided by the character of the events which distinguish the early part of the campaign. I am sorry that what has passed is not on the whole calculated to hasten a favourable decision. . . .

I hope to be able to inform you with accuracy concerning the visit of Murat to Dresden, where he now is, and where he commands the cavalry; I can only say at present that I believe his journey thither was not inconsistent with the tenor of his preceding conduct, and that even his stay there now depends on Bonaparte pursuing a course of moderation respecting peace which has been laid down by Murat.

Propositions for an exchange of prisoners have been received; and at the same time the Emperor received a letter from Bonaparte informing him that he had been present at the battles of Lowenburgh and Dresden, and was in good health, which he hoped that his father-in-law would be glad to hear. We have had no official communication of this, and although it is suspected that this letter was accompanied by fresh overtures of a pacific nature, nothing has transpired.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Teplitz, Sept. 12, 1813.*

Although the wise determination of His Imperial Majesty in making common cause with the Allies,

<sup>1</sup> Frederic von Gentz, 1764–1832, Aulic Counsellor.

and the vigour and energy with which that determination has been carried into effect, have relieved me, as well as Your Lordship, from all anxiety respecting the principal end of my mission, nevertheless, in the instructions which I had the honour to receive, Your Lordship has adverted to other objects of the highest importance, and to these I have not failed to direct the attention of the Austrian Minister. Before entering on these details, I think it right to inform Your Lordship of the present views and feelings of Count Metternich, as they have been imparted to me, apparently without reserve, in my frequent conferences with His Excellency.

It is impossible to imagine terms more cordial, or a manner more sincere, than have been invariably employed concerning the Alliance with Great Britain. Count Metternich declared that it had always been his wish to accomplish so desirable a purpose; that although compelled to yield for a time to the pressure of circumstances, he had never lost sight of the good cause, or of the value of a connection with England; that the natural order of things, as well as the experience of history, evinced the wisdom of this connection, which, being entirely free from any secret source of discontent or collision of interests, could only tend to the mutual advantage of the two countries.

He spoke at considerable length—and has frequently resumed the subject—on the present situation and views of Austria, more especially on the resumption of the Imperial Crown of Germany. He said the proposition was put forward by Russia and Prussia, as a mark of kindness and good-will; but on presenting the thing to himself as if it were already accomplished, he could discover no good practical consequence as likely to result from it. He thought

it a mere name, and had no hesitation in saying that he considered Austria, with reference to the cause in which she is now engaged, as much stronger than if at the head of the Germanic body. "The grand object of our cause," to use his own words, "being to reduce the power of France, and restore independence to Germany; in order to do this effectually, it is necessary to enlist on our side the feelings both of Princes and their subjects; in short, to render the cause truly popular. If we fought to restore a state of things which has already crumbled away, and which, even if its restoration were practicable, is scarcely to be desired, we should do that which would go far to paralyze the efforts of the lesser States: but if we fight only for general independence,—if we put ourselves at the head of those very States, in contending for this independence,—we unite in our cause all the best feelings of man, and give it a strength from its popularity which it could never otherwise possess. When once the power of France," he continued, "is essentially reduced, there will be plenty of time to fix the destiny of the German States; but we desire for Austria no other species of Empire or ascendancy in Germany, than that legitimate influence which the neighbourhood of a great State must give it over the councils of the less: this, from the nature of things, we shall possess, and this is all we desire." He said that Russia appeared to enter into these principles, but that Prussia had certain views of detail which, although perhaps not unnatural in her situation, were less liberal, and less just. He desired to know the sentiments of the English Government. I replied that as I conceived the main object of England in the continental war was the reduction of the power of France, the real independence of Europe, and



especially of the German States, whatever should most effectually secure those objects would be most agreeable to England. That although His Royal Highness the Prince Regent would see with pleasure the resumption of the Imperial German Crown by the Emperor of Austria, or any other measure by which the prosperity and power of his family, as a main element of the Germanic Body, could be substantially increased, yet I entirely assented to the justice of His Excellency's remarks with respect to increasing by every possible means the general popularity of the cause, and of sacrificing all individual and separate objects until the grand purpose of the Alliance should be accomplished.

Following up the principle of rendering the cause popular, he thought that every pacific proposition should be listened to:—that we should never refuse to treat;—that the whole odium of the war should be thrown on Bonaparte;—that nothing could be lost by treating, for it never could be the interest of any of the Allies to separate themselves at a Congress,—and that, as a good peace was the sole end of the war, it was indifferent by what means it was obtained. I replied that England had no objection whatever to treat, provided peace was the real object of the negotiation,—that if she thought such a peace as we concurred in desiring was more likely to be obtained by this method than by force of arms, it could not be doubted which course she would prefer. That in this, as in all other matters, she would act in concert with her Allies, having reference to the stipulations of existing treaties, and to her own vital interests. I added that when it was thought expedient, I was prepared to explain to him what were the views of England with reference to the terms of peace. . . . .

I should have had no objections to communicate to Count Metternich the whole of Your Lordship's Despatch on the subject of peace, but Lord Cathcart having judged it to be expedient, in conjunction with the Russian Minister, to withhold from Austria the knowledge of her Mediation having been accepted by Great Britain, and they still wishing this fact to remain secret, I thought it right so to concert matters, in the first instance, with Count Nesselrode, that no objection might remain on the part of Russia to the measure which I intended to adopt.

Count Metternich expressed himself to be entirely satisfied with the wisdom and moderation displayed by the British Government on this important subject; although he confessed that he was not prepared to expect anything of a different character, from the opinion he had formed of the spirit which directed the Councils of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent. In order to prove how entirely the general principles of the Statement accorded with the views of Austria, he showed me the copy of a Treaty now about to be signed with Russia and Prussia, by which the Sovereigns mutually pledge themselves to the employment of their whole means in the prosecution of the war, the object of which is stated to be a just and durable peace, founded on the absolute independence of all the German States, and the restoration of Austria and Prussia to their situation in the year 1806. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the general principles of the Treaty, or its provisions, so far as they extend, but no mention is made of Spain or Holland. All arrangements respecting the future destinies of the lesser States of Germany are postponed until a more favourable moment, with the exception of His Majesty's German dominions,

the restitution of which to His Majesty is guaranteed by the three Powers in a secret Article of the Treaty.

### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Prague, Sept. 14, 1813.*

Your Lordship may imagine my surprise at learning, after the transactions which had taken place, that Murat was actually in Dresden, and said to be commanding the cavalry of Bonaparte. On discussing this subject with Count Metternich, he gave me the following narrative, which he had received from Murat, and to which, from circumstances corroborative of its truth, he was disposed to give full credit.

It appears that Bonaparte, having contrived to deprive him of any direct communication with Germany for a considerable time, wrote to him to say that the question of peace was decided between him and Austria—that it was finally settled—and that it would serve for the foundation of a general pacification. He hoped that his brother-in-law would not be the last person to make up his differences with him, he begged him to come to Dresden, and everything should be settled according to his wishes. On receiving this intelligence, Murat held a Council, at which it was decided he should go to Dresden, as being, in the deserted state in which he imagined himself to be left, the only means of averting the vengeance of Bonaparte. This decision was contrary to the opinion and urgent remonstrances of the Queen, who, it appears, is extremely inimical to her brother. Murat, although at Munich and other places he had reason to doubt the probability of peace being signed, still continued his journey, and



arrived in Dresden the day before the conclusion of the armistice. He was put under arrest, but finally yielded to the solicitations of Bonaparte, and consented to command the cavalry, on condition that, after the first successes, Bonaparte would make such moderate and reasonable proposals of peace as should ensure their acceptance by the Allies. Notwithstanding this singular transaction, he has sent an agent from Dresden to Count Metternich, by whom he assures him that his troops shall observe the strictest neutrality—that not a man shall leave Naples—and that he wishes the former negotiations to be continued. Count Metternich has replied, that it is quite impossible to treat in any satisfactory manner with a person in his situation, that he must either appear independent himself, or publicly make over his authority to some person to treat on his behalf. The intercourse has nevertheless been kept up, and the Austrian Minister appears convinced that Murat will finally join the Allies, especially if, as there is fortunately reason to believe, the success of Bonaparte in the war is improbable. In order to assist his negotiation with Murat, Count Metternich wished to be confidentially put in possession of a written statement, explaining the precise extent of my authority and disposition to treat. I demurred to the unnecessary consignment of so important and delicate a subject to writing, but he urged it so strongly, and stated that he should be enabled to proceed with so much greater effect and probability of success if in possession of this authority, that I yielded, although somewhat reluctantly, to his request. I was the more induced to this compliance, as Your Lordship had instructed me to pursue the whole of this transaction in strict concert with the Austrian Government, and with a deference to their

wishes. It is for this reason, that in the confidential note which I presented, and of which I have the honour to enclose a copy, I thought it right to put forward the views of Austria, and to act in compliance with her desires.

### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Prague, Sept. 14, 1813.*

I understand from Metternich that hopes are entertained of Bavaria, and that they increase daily. Could we but meet with some decided success, there is little doubt they would speedily declare. If Bonaparte should really leave Dresden and the line of the Elbe from necessity, I think it will be sufficient. This is the true reason of the inactivity of Austria in the Tyrol, etc. They wish to carry on everything quietly with Bavaria. In addition to this, I perceive they do not attach any great importance to its possession. They are altogether less eager about the south than the Polish frontier. Suspicions of Russia are beginning, and the plan of Stein, of giving Saxony to Prussia, with the consent of Russia, is alarming to Austria, which looks to Russian aggrandisement in Poland as the consequence.

The ill-will and spirit of intrigue between the two nations at Headquarters, rather increases. The Prussians do not take much part, but the language of the Russians is violent in the greatest degree. I believe, in the late transactions, it is admitted that Schwartzenberg has done well, but nothing will content the Russians but the Emperor having the command. After all the Emperor, without a good council, would be worse than anyone; but there is no chance of his being tried. They talk more and more of a separation of the Forces. This is bad,

but perhaps it may be necessary. Metternich is sanguine, and hopes that things will soften down by time. I think there is nothing but success which can have any effect in allaying their animosities. The life at Headquarters is really miserable—I never expected to be in such a scrape. Wretched habitation,—no food,—the air pestiferous with dead bodies of men and horses,—such are some of the *agrémens*. One morning we had the advance of the French within two English miles of the town, and a fire of musketry.

I hear that Metternich and Stadion speak well of me; this is some consolation, though a poor one, for the sacrifice of every comfort in life.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO SIR CHARLES STEWART

*Teplitz, Sept. 18.*

We are here in much the same situation. The *retreat* was premature. The French were yesterday in the plain, and are now at the foot of the hill. They showed yesterday between seventy and eighty thousand men. You will be glad to hear that the Austrians gained great credit last night by a movement of Colloredo on the flank of the French, who were pressing the Russians and Prussians down the hill. Wilson said it was executed in a beautiful style. They took a General and some hundred prisoners. There was some brisk cannonading during the evening. It is ascertained that Bonaparte intended to attack us the day you left Teplitz, and was on the spot himself, endeavouring to get down his guns, which was found to be impracticable.

Party spirit is much the same, but there has been a satisfactory meeting between Schwartzemberg and the Emperor of Russia. The latter declared that



he was now convinced of the wisdom and prudence of Schwartzenberg's measures. The most important news is, that Benningsen's corps is ordered here. He is to keep the enemy in check in front, while we undertake a movement on his flank, which we are not strong enough to do alone.

There is no danger of our being committed to Murat. Metternich has acted with the greatest caution and prudence. He will draw Murat step by step, and not produce my communication until we have him fully pledged. He never intended to make any further use of it. I wish Castlereagh knew this, as perhaps he may be alarmed by the bare statement of what has already taken place.

In a despatch of the 30th August from Lord Castlereagh he encloses a copy of a letter from the Duc de Berri to Field-Marshal the Marquis Wellington. The purport of it was whether in an invasion of France the co-operation of the Duc de Berri would be agreeable or distasteful to the Austrian Government.

Your Lordship is aware that the Court of Vienna, in conjunction with the Emperor of Russia, has strongly recommended that the Allied armies on the side of the Pyrenees should, if possible, make an irruption with the South of France.

The reasoning brought forward by Lord Wellington will enable Your Lordship to satisfy the Austrian Government that the period for making such an attempt must, on military grounds, be at all events postponed till Lord Wellington's rear has been secured by the fall of Pampeluna and St. Sebastian. The Allies will, however, in the meantime derive the advantage of having a numerous French army sufficiently occupied in that quarter to prevent any detachment of it to Germany.

## TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

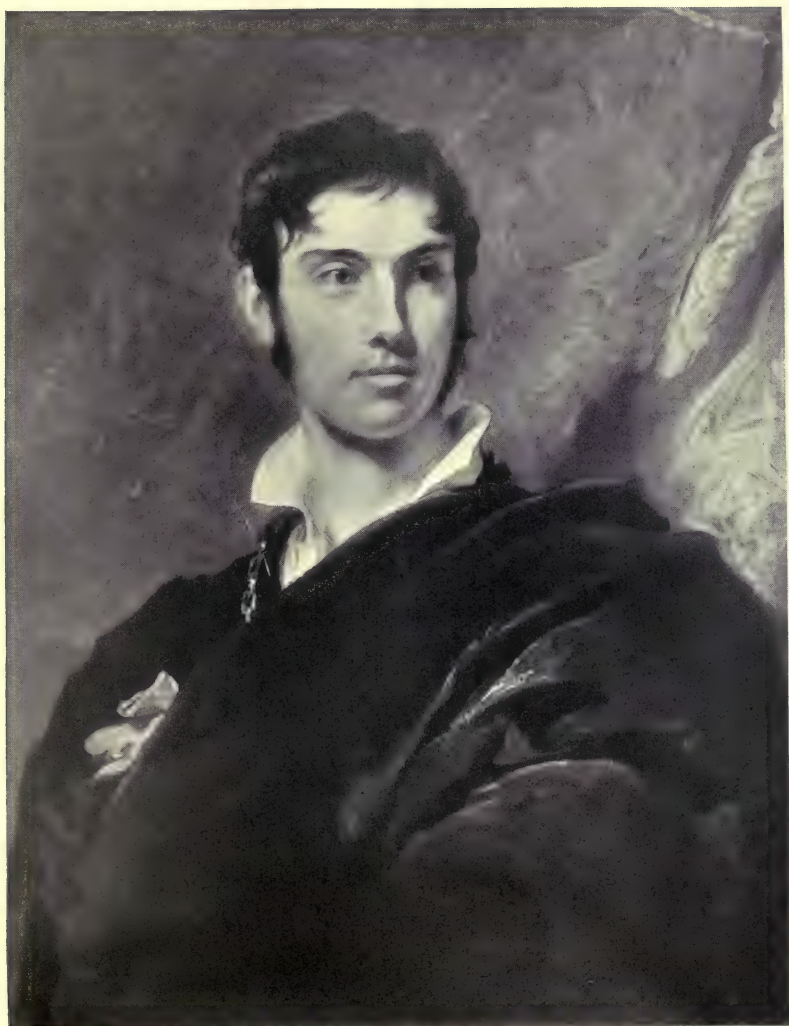
*Teplitz, Sept. 19, 1813.*

The French are close to us, occupying rising ground within three English miles. We do not know the amount of their force, but it is said to be 130,000 men. We have from 90,000 to 100,000. There has been a great deal of firing all day, and a good many killed and wounded. Every morning we pack up everything, ready to start, in case they attack the town. The worst of it is, I am extremely unwell. I have had a severe attack of Cholera morbus; it is still bad, but I hope it is better than it was.

I get on very well with my business, but it multiplies both in difficulty and importance. The great thing which has been most satisfactory is the liking which Metternich has taken to me; you have no idea of his language to others, for to me he has said little or nothing. However, I am most anxious to get home, yet I hardly know how to leave so much important negotiation with all parts of Europe unfinished; and they are ever so slow about my Treaty that I scarcely know when to hope that it may be concluded. The Baltic will not be passable after November, and will be very unpleasant then.

Nothing can be more beautiful than this country, but it is ruined in every possible manner. The lights of the armies close together form a striking sight at night. I have just come in from a little eminence that commands the view. The horrible thing is the wounded of all nations. It quite haunts one day and night; such dreadful objects in every variety of misery.

I will not go over a list of my hardships and privations at this abominable place, where we literally run the risk of being starved, and where the horses



GEORGE, 4TH EARL OF ABERDEEN.

From a picture, now at Haddo House, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. Engraved by G. Turner,  
1809.





die of hunger daily by dozens. I hope to God we shall soon change our quarters; yet I know of no better town in the neighbourhood, and we must be near the enemy.

*Teplitz, Sept. 22.*

The French have retired to some miles distance, and there is no immediate prospect of an action. Our cavalry are almost starved, and require some days' rest.

LORD ABERDEEN TO SIR CHARLES STEWART

*Teplitz, Sept. 18, 1813.*

There has been a good deal of cannonading this morning. They have now retired to the hill. It is quite certain that Bonaparte's horse was wounded last night while he was reconnoitring on his back.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Teplitz, Sept. 22, 1813.*

I have to inform Your Lordship that, an opportunity having arisen in one of my conversations with Count Metternich to mention the proposal of the Duc de Berri relative to his junction with Lord Wellington, and the French force which he hoped to be able, by his presence, to bring under His Lordship's standard, I fully ascertained the views and feelings of the Austrian Government on this subject, as they were frankly communicated by Count Metternich. He entreated that, in the prosecution of the war against France, Great Britain would entirely lay aside all reference to an Austrian interest in the question, as connected with the person of the French Emperor. He felt convinced that the views of Austria were perfectly conformable with those of Great Britain,—the attainment of a solid peace by

the speedy and effectual diminution or destruction of the preponderating power of Bonaparte. He was quite content to leave the matter to the discretion of Lord Wellington and to the British Government. If they should be of opinion that the services of the Duc de Berri were likely to promote the success of the common cause, he wished them to be accepted in any manner which should be thought expedient. At the same time he observed that he knew the interior of France well, and that he was decidedly of opinion little would be gained by the presence and active co-operation of His Highness, and was very incredulous as to the amount and value of the force likely to join him.

I am inclined to believe that the Austrian Minister himself is not deficient in hostility to the Government or person of Bonaparte. The difficulty is with the Emperor. From a weakness which cannot be considered as altogether unnatural, he hesitates between the welfare of his people and the safety of his child. I would not have Your Lordship imagine that I entertain the least apprehension of this weakness influencing the views and conduct of His Imperial Majesty in the prosecution of the war; on the contrary, I am persuaded that the object which His Majesty has proposed to himself is most wise and just, and that there is not the least reason to doubt his perseverance and zeal in the pursuit. Indeed I have the best reason for knowing that it is only as connected with the security of his daughter that he takes any interest in the fate of Bonaparte, and that if she were safely restored to him at Vienna, he would be well contented to remain without a son-in-law. I wish particularly to convey to Your Lordship my impression that Count Metternich, individually, still less partakes of any lingering



sentiment of respect for the person of the French Emperor.

In corroboration of this opinion, I may quote some remarkable expressions which he recently used, connected with the subject. He said the Alliance had not been properly understood in England or the rest of the world. He added : " No country in Europe has made greater efforts, or has suffered more in the good cause of which we have never lost sight. We have acted the part of the oak when we had strength and means, and have bent like the reed under the presence of imperious circumstances ; but, yielding or resisting, we have always kept in view the good cause of Europe ; we have at all times looked forward to a state of repose founded on a due equilibrium of the Great Powers of Christendom."

*Teplitz, Sept. 23, 1813.*

DEAR LORD HARROWBY,

The wonder is how we exist at all in this vile hole, with scarcely anything to eat, and that of the worst kind. Surrounded by such multitudes of the living and the dead, human and brute, the air is pestilential. Novice as I am, in the scenes of destruction, the continual sight of the poor wounded wretches of all nations is quite horrible, and haunts me day and night. Walking in a sort of shrubbery belonging to a house in the town, I stumbled over a great heap of arms and legs which had been thrown out of a summer-house in which they had been cut off : this is a pleasant incident, of a more interesting nature than you are likely to meet with in your walks at Sandon.

However, I do not deny that there is a great deal very striking in the sight of these five armies with all their pride, pomp and circumstance. The

Emperors and Princes assembled give a lustre which might prevent many from seeing anything else.

I have found my own Emperor much more sensible than I expected. The Emperor of Russia agreeable and rather clever, but *showing off*. The King of Prussia most judicious, perfectly right-headed, and a truly interesting character, deficient in nothing but in confidence. The heroes we read of at a distance with respect dwindle into minor figures at a near approach. Barclay de Tolly dull and stupid in the last degree. Wittgenstein not an uncommon person. Jomini is high in the favour of the Emperor of Russia; I cannot say I like him; great pretension with an appearance of cunning and duplicity in his countenance, the effect of which it will require all his skill to counteract.

We have been kept on the alert for this last week by a cannonading every morning, sometimes very near us; and musketry within two or three English miles. Our army in position; a fine sight, but the weather is very rainy, and they are perfectly exposed. Crowds of Cossacks prowl around. The country is completely devastated. There is a want of water, in every sense, for, among other miseries, that we have is scarcely drinkable.

Sincerely yours,

ABERDEEN.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Teplitz, Sept. 24, 1813.*

I have to congratulate Your Lordship on the certain prospect of the accession of Bavaria to the common cause. The Emperor despatched yesterday full powers to Prince Reuss enabling him to conclude with General Wrede the Treaty of Alliance.

It is to the wisdom and moderation of Austrian

Councils, evinced by the extinction of all national hatred and desire of revenge, that we are mainly to ascribe this event, which it is to be presumed will, in its immediate effects, decide the fate of Germany, and secure the independence of Europe. His Imperial Majesty has addressed a letter to the King of Bavaria, in which his views and intentions are frankly explained. He repeats the motives which induced him to join the Allies and expose the unjust and extravagant pretensions of France. He explains at length the objects of the war, and declares that he will never lay down his arms until a peace is obtained, founded on the absolute independence of Germany, and supported by an equal balance of the Great European Powers. The actual dimensions of the Bavarian territories are guaranteed, subject to such local alterations as the mutual convenience of the respective countries may render desirable. A Bavarian army of more than thirty thousand men will unite with the Austrian forces, now about to descend into Franconia, and operate on the communications of Bonaparte. There is little reason to doubt that the example of Bavaria will be speedily followed by other States of the Confederation, and thus Your Lordship may not, perhaps, think me too sanguine in trusting that by the hostile movements of our armies, and the falling off of his adherents, Bonaparte will be under the necessity of abandoning the line of the Elbe, and may probably think himself fortunate if he is able to gain the Rhine without the destruction of his whole army. At the same time the Hungarian force joins the Allied army, Prince Reuss will penetrate into Italy.

Lord Aberdeen says that in obedience to instructions he has endeavoured to discover the ulterior views of the Austrian Cabinet with regard to Italy.



Count Metternich told me, that in the event of the success of the Allied armies, the line of the Mincio was the frontier to which Austria looked. That the Grand Duke of Wurtzburgh should be replaced in Tuscany as an indemnification of the Duchy, which would be required in the arrangement with Bavaria, Austria being determined to resume possession of the Tyrol. He said that he presumed all parties would concur in the propriety of restoring Rome to the Pope.

I perceived that the Austrian Minister was very anxious to re-establish the King of Sardinia with a great increase of power and territory. Neither to this nor to any other of his propositions had I anything to object, but I thought it right to recall to his recollection the claims of the Sicilian family to an indemnity in some part of Italy.

*Teplitz, Sept. 25, 1813.*

MY DEAREST LADY MARIA,

Things look very well; I hope it will not be long before I am able to send my despatches by the way of Hamburgh, in which case my own return will be easy.

I intend to go to Prague, where Metternich has allotted me a most magnificent house, formerly inhabited by Colincourt during the negotiations.

*Sept. 29.*—Bad as my lodging is, there are two great men in the same house: the Duke of Oldenburgh, who is a good-natured fellow enough, and Prince Eugene of Wirtemburgh, one of the best officers in the Russian army, a very fine young man.

We have had fêtes lately. The Russian Guards gave a dinner to us all on the day of the Emperor's Coronation. They constructed an edifice of fir branches that was really very handsome. The dinner

excellent,—very fine music; Austrian, Russian and Prussian. Such an assemblage of Princes and great men that the whole was very imposing. My modesty was much shocked by the forward place I was obliged to assume. The three Sovereigns sat at the head of a table; then the Prince Royal of Prussia (a very fine young fellow). But I was obliged to put myself before the King's brother, and all the greatest men, very much to my annoyance.

Yesterday we all (the English) dined with the Emperor of Russia, who appeared in the Order of the Garter for the first time. As he never wears shoes, and has always great jack-boots, he was obliged to put the Garter above the knee, which, as you may believe, had a strange appearance.

I have seen all the great men whose names at a distance are imposing, but I think very little of most of them. Old Platoff is a striking figure, but quite a barbarian. Bensizlea sensible, but near eighty years of age. I rather like the Grand Duke Constantine, he is the image of Paul, and rather mad, but he is clever and entertaining. There is a very fine boy here, the brother of the Prince of Orange, who promises well. The Prince Royal of Prussia is the person of the greatest promise. He is very like his mother and shows great spirit: he has been bred in a good school. The Commander-in-Chief of the combined armies, Prince Schwartzemberg, is a most excellent person; I believe a good officer, but he is in a very difficult situation with so many different interests to conciliate, and has done well. He is very agreeable and a most excellent man.

We are moving to the left with Saxony. The Austrians marched yesterday, the Russians are going to-day: we shall leave a considerable force here under Benningsen to protect Bohemia. We shall

soon find ourselves in some wretched village to which even this is a Paradise. God bless you.

ABERDEEN.

*Teplitz, Oct. 1.*

We have Benningsen's army come up. It is a very seasonable reinforcement, for the army here is sickly. The autumnal tints are beautiful, but it is not very safe wandering in the woods; as, if one is alone, there is some chance of being run through with the spear of a Cossack, or shot by one of the innumerable quantity of people who are always firing off muskets. The other day, as Wilson and I were walking, a ball came close between us. So you see war has its dangers even to the pacific.

*Comotan, Oct. 8, 1813.*

The two Emperors left Teplitz for this place on the 5th. The King is still there.

On Sept. 23 Lord Aberdeen wrote to Lord Castle-reagh that in his communication to Count Metternich he had limited himself to a statement of the terms on which Great Britain would be willing to join in negotiations for peace, that he had not told him that the mediation of Austria had been accepted by the British Government:

In reflecting on this proceeding I became more and more doubtful of its propriety. The confidence with which Count Metternich treated me seemed to demand a better return, and the friendly relations so happily existing between the two countries almost gave him a right to expect that in a matter of this nature I should have no reserve. Even if concealment had been desirable, it is obvious that it would have been scarcely practicable, and that what had been communicated to the Courts of Russia, Prussia



and Sweden could not long be withheld from that of Austria.

Lord Aberdeen proceeds to say that he informed Count Metternich that the mediation had been accepted. The intimation was received with "some surprise," but no displeasure was shown.

Under the same date Lord Aberdeen wrote privately to Lord Castlereagh :

I wish I could be more expeditious, but the *lenteurs* of the Austrian Cabinet are proverbial. Metternich continues to be as cordial and as confidential as possible. I think this man must be honest; yet it may be, after all, that he is only a most consummate actor. I will be sufficiently cautious, but I will also retain the favourable opinion I have of him until I see some good ground to change it. . . .

I have seen something of Schwartzenberg, and through him have some curious information about Bonaparte. It is said, and Schwartzenberg believes the story to be authentic, that very recently Berthier, in the name of a large proportion of the officers in the army, represented to Bonaparte the necessity of peace; he replied that he wished much for peace, but that this was not the time to talk of it. The Glory of France required fresh success. Before Schwartzenberg left Paris he had a conversation with the Empress on the subject; she was much affected at the prospect of war with Austria, and gave way to the strongest demonstrations of grief. She said her husband sincerely wished for peace, but that it was impossible for him to make such a peace as would satisfy the vanity of the French nation.

No one knows what to make of his present movements. It is certain that he was down here himself with 90,000 men,—too few to beat us, and

too many for a reconnaissance. A battle seems yet to be expected. The French army is now undoubtedly in great distress,—but we also begin to be in want. The cavalry suffer very much; and we have no magazines. Benningsen's advanced guard will be up on the 26th.

Among the Chiefs I think there is little more good-will, but the three armies are pretty much the same as formerly, full of mutual discontent and recrimination. This is what makes the prospect of a general action so alarming; for in the event of any great disaster, the seeds of internal weakness, and even of dissolution, would rapidly increase; and this mighty combination of forces, apparently so well cemented, might not improbably fall to pieces. If we can go on for some time longer, with a little more activity, perhaps, than we can boast of at present, we must succeed.

I have been intimately persuaded for some time of a necessity for the separation of the Sovereigns; the intrigues, cabal and *tracasserie* of every kind by which they are surrounded, and which is here brought into a kind of focus, is quite incredible, and must have the worst effect sooner or later.

I wish you would give me some instructions about Italy; there is a considerable prospect of doing something in the North, now that the Tyrol is up; but I do not exactly know as to the course to be pursued. I cannot be wrong in keeping up intelligence, and encouraging them to hope for a liberation from the French yoke, but I fear Lombardy, Tuscany and Genoa look with little anxiety to the success of the Austrian arms. Still, the desire to get rid of the French is so great that much may be done in any case. If I could get forward with the Treaty, and arrange matters with Metternich, I have some

thoughts of going myself to Vienna to see our agents, who are there collected, waiting for means and instructions. The Tyrol, Switzerland and Italy are open to us and should not be neglected. I had a private audience on Tuesday of the Emperor of Russia. We talked much of the state of affairs, and although sanguine, and repeating several times that all nations were weary of the yoke of Napoleon, he seemed to look to a termination of the contest at no great distance, of a character not quite corresponding with our hopes. He said, "The final result may be more, or may be less, but it must be good." I said that with our great means, and his perseverance, I trusted it would be such as to meet our most sanguine views. He repeated over and over again the same assertion. I cannot yet tell you anything positive about Bavaria, but I am more sanguine than ever.

Napoleon, in the hope of sowing dissension among the Allies, offered to surrender Zamose, then being besieged by Russian forces, to the Emperor of Austria. The Emperor Francis replied that, Zamose not being besieged by his troops, he could have nothing to do with its capitulation. Lord Aberdeen, writing on Sept. 29 to Lord Castlereagh, says :

Your Lordship will not fail to observe the insidious nature of the proposition respecting Zamose. Situated on the Galician frontier, Bonaparte naturally imagined that the possession of it must be of the utmost importance to Austria, with respect to the future destiny of Poland, and the securities of his territories in that quarter. But the endeavour to excite an apprehension and jealousy of the success of the Russian arms in the siege of this important fortress has happily been rendered abortive by the magnanimity of His Imperial Majesty.



*Sept. 30.*—I have learnt that the Emperor of Russia, animated by the same sentiments which have so nobly distinguished the Emperor of Austria, has offered, in the event of the surrender of Zamose, to put the Austrian troops in possession of the fortress, or that it should be held conjointly by the troops of both nations until a peace.

*Teplitz, Oct. 1, 1813.*

Although I do not often trouble Your Lordship on the general state of our military prospects, I am tempted at present to give you a cursory view of our position, as the information is derived from sources of unquestionable authority.

A part of General Benningsen's army is arrived, and this morning 24,500 Infantry, composing the Corps of General Docteroff, were inspected by the three Sovereigns. They are fine men, well armed, and sufficiently well clothed for service. It is intended that General Benningsen, with his army, should remain in this position, while the main army continues its movement to the left by Comotan, Marienberg, Zwickau and Gera. It is not the intention of Prince Schwartzenberg to separate the great mass of the army, but he will advance light corps to Saalfeld and Erfurth.

Prince Schwartzenberg has this evening received certain information of the enemy's movements. Bonaparte has left 15,000 men in Dresden, and the day before yesterday had his Headquarters in Leipsic with 100,000. Between Dresden and Peterswalde on the Teplitz Road are 35,000 men; at Freyberg and in the neighbourhood 15,000; at Meissen and Torgau 30,000. The remainder of the troops are either on the lower Elbe, or on the right bank of the river. If it shall be found that the enemy is not in greater

force on the Teplitz Road than I have mentioned, it is intended to attack with Docteroff's and Tolstoy's corps, forming part of Benningsen's army; perhaps Collorado's column may be employed, if Tolstoy does not come up before the time allowed for this operation expires.

The enemy has put in motion about 50,000 men of the *arrière-ban*; according to some accounts they may be on the Saal between the 10th and 16th of this month, but the Austrian calculation gives only 50,000 men to this army, including Langeron's Corps, said to consist of 15,000. It also supposes their arrival between Bamberg and Erfurth to be impossible before the 20th. The general plan of the Allies is to manœuvre Bonaparte out of the line of the Elbe, or to interpose between him and his resources. The new turn given to the politics of Bavaria renders us quite tranquil as to the safety of our left flank in the event of any forward movement; indeed we may speedily expect active co-operation from that quarter.

This then in brief, is the situation of the two armies. The enemy is certainly most formidable from the strength and commodiousness of his position, the concentration of his forces, and the unity of his councils. The Allied troops, on the other hand, more numerous, superior in the description of men, and the zeal by which they are animated, are likewise in the midst of their resources.

Prince Schwartzenberg has adopted the wise resolution of fighting no great battle, unless it can be done with an evident advantage; but by partial affairs and continued movements so to harass and distress the enemy as at last to ensure his destruction. This method may not be brilliant or rapid in its operation, but in the opinion of all those entitled to

speak with authority, it best suits the peculiar formation of the army, and affords it the most certain prospect of success.

Writing again on Oct. 1, Lord Aberdeen discusses the present administration and future destiny of the conquered provinces :

You are already aware of the revolutionary plan of Stein and his friends, by which the whole of the lesser States of Germany are to be new modelled, and two confederations established, to be under the protectorship of Austria and Prussia. The Austrian Government protested against this project at the time of its appearance, and they retain at the present moment all their former sentiments.

He continues after referring to the Austrian policy :

What then can we expect from a system of destruction, which is to trample everything established and violate all that is respected? Instead of imitating Bonaparte, we ought to pursue a conduct directly opposite, and avoid everything of a revolutionary tendency. Let us restore everything to the right owners; make what terms and conditions you please, but the principle of restitution should never be lost sight of. There is a spirit in the north of Germany which is dangerous. The *friends of virtue* ought to be attended to. It is impossible to say what may arise from this discontented and restless disposition; but it is clear that we ought to put down as much as possible the mischievous effects produced by these speculating philosophers and politicians.

The object of Austria is to have the Provinces administered and their resources obtained in a temporary manner, and it is proposed that they should



be placed for a time under a military Governor, and their finances managed by a civil commission. The head of this commission is Stein, and the Austrian Government has a reasonable dread that he will use his utmost endeavours to accomplish his favourite plan.

Lord Aberdeen says that he apprehends the Prince Regent cannot be particularly anxious to see his Hanoverian dominions under the protectorship of Prussia.

The real sum of the matter is, that while we are fighting to destroy the Confederation of the Rhine, we shall raise up another as odious and unjust.

#### TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Comotan, Oct. 9, 1813.*

His Imperial Majesty left Teplitz on the 5th instant, and fixed his Headquarters in this town. In consequence of very insufficient accommodation to be found here, the diplomatic body accredited to His Majesty were invited to repair to Saatez, a considerable town at no great distance. Thither I went accordingly, but I found by special command of His Majesty a lodging had been provided for me at this place. I mention the circumstance as an indication of the gracious condescension which I have experienced from His Majesty on this and other occasions. The army has advanced in a direct line towards Leipsic, near which town the Headquarters of Prince Schwartzenberg are established. The Prince Royal and General Blücher having advanced towards the same point, the Allied forces have nearly effected their junction; a *rideau*, therefore, is drawn across this part of Saxony, extending from Dessau to Marienberg on the Bohemian frontier. In the

meantime General Benningsen, with the Corps of Clam-Collorado, has driven the enemy from his entrenchments at Giesshubel and has advanced towards Dresden on the great road from Teplitz. The actual position and intentions of Bonaparte are entirely unknown. A strong force, not less than 50,000 men, is opposed to Prince Schwartzberg, and the general belief is, that Bonaparte himself has made a rapid movement with the mass of his army to attack General Blücher before his junction with the Prince Royal is completed. Be this as it may, it is not likely that any partial advantage will materially improve his prospects, or render the ultimate success of the Allies more doubtful. His communication with France being totally destroyed, his army in considerable distress,—his magazines nearly exhausted, and the country in which he is utterly without the means of replenishing them, he must shortly find it necessary to break through the circle which has been drawn round him. In this attempt he may probably succeed, but there is every reason to hope that it will be accompanied by the destruction of a great part of his army.

Full justice is done to the military talents and able combinations of the Prince Marshal. Had he been less prudent and circumspect in his movements we should not have been placed in the formidable and commanding attitude which we are now enabled to assume.

*P.S. Oct. 10.*—By intelligence received this morning, it appears that Prince Schwartzberg with the main body of his army is at Chemnitz, and in the neighbourhood. Bonaparte left Dresden on the 7th with the King of Saxony and his family, and is at Rochlitz, where his army is chiefly assembled. It is the intention of the Prince to attack him to-morrow

or the next day, if circumstances should justify the attempt. In the meantime General Benningsen has advanced to Dresden, in which, it is said, Bonaparte has left but a feeble garrison, consisting, according to report, of not more than 3,000 men.

*Comotan, Oct. 9, 1813.*

Everything goes on as we could wish it. Bonaparte is now nearly surrounded by the different armies, and if they act but tolerably well in concert, he must be totally defeated. Schwartzenberg has shown great skill and just judgment. The Emperor Alexander went last night to Chemnitz, and Cathcart followed him this morning. I have not much to say of the Treaty in addition to my despatch. Metternich pressed very much to have the article containing the demand for warlike stores inserted in the Treaty. We were near two hours in warm contest on the subject, but I would not yield. I consented to receive a note in which the demand should be made, with reference to a new Treaty of subsidy, to be made at the end of the present agreement; and as Austria was in immediate want of these stores, I promised to recommend to your favourable consideration the proposal of their being furnished as soon as possible, and the amount to be taken in account of the subsidiary Treaty to be made hereafter.

As you have behaved so liberally with respect to Russia and Prussia, I think you cannot do less for Austria, who, you must recollect, is only emerging by unparalleled exertions from a state of the most deplorable weakness. I am fully persuaded that the Austrian Government is at this moment the most zealous of the Allies in the prosecution of the war, and I see no reason to doubt its perseverance. In an audience of the Emperor the other day he spoke



without reserve of Bonaparte. He said that until he was behind the Rhine it was impossible to feel any security. He added, that some persons wished to make him (the Emperor) believe that this restless and ambitious spirit would subside in time; but he was convinced that so long as he retained the power to disturb the repose of Europe, he would always put it in execution. He assented to everything I said about Bonaparte, and encouraged me to talk with great freedom.

I am just returned from dining with the Emperor; he is always very gracious, and to-day unusually so. After dinner he spoke to me a great deal in private, and entered very fully into his views. He reverted to the subject of Bonaparte, and while expressing his sanguine hopes of success, he said that, after all, the only real security would be in his death. I mention this to show that the situation of his daughter has no effect on his conduct or his opinions; and as he has so much departed from his usual custom of talking very sparingly on political matters with Foreign Ministers, I do not think it likely that it should be for the purpose of deceit.

As I have mentioned Bonaparte, I must tell you a circumstance which exhibits him in a point of view more detestable and brutal than I had imagined. I had it from Metternich, to whom he made the speech. It was with reference to the death of Duroc, of which you recollect there was a scene represented in the papers, which, to people in general, although it savoured a little of French heroics, was still affecting. He told Metternich that he must not believe the nonsense of the newspapers. It was true he went into the room where Duroc was, who said, "Sortez, Sire. Cette chambre vous fera mal." He added, "Effectivement, il est comme un rat mort!"

The devotion of Lannes and his corps at the battle of Aspern, as you recollect, saved Bonaparte and the wreck of his army. He was also a great personal favourite. When Metternich was at Paris, Bonaparte talked to him of the battle, and the death of Lannes. He said that he went to see him, and heard him in great pain calling, "Ah Dieu! Aussitôt qu'il a prononcé le nom de Dieu, je savois que le B——e alloit crever." Is not this a feeling way to talk of one's favourites and friends?

You may depend on it that Metternich is as free from any personal respect for Bonaparte as we could wish. I know Stewart thinks I am too sanguine as to his sincerity, but I believe it to be without reason. . . .

I shall go forward with the Emperor to-morrow as far as Marienberg. Schwartzenberg is beyond Chemnitz. . . .

#### TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Comotau, Oct. 8, 1813.*

The two Emperors left Teplitz for this place on the 5th. The King of Prussia is still there. This being such a small town, the Emperor of Austria invited me, together with the Corps Diplomatique attached to him, to go to Saatez, whither I went the day before yesterday. Saatez is a curious old town, situated on the Eger. They assigned me very good quarters; it was an old house, such as you read of in romances, and see sometimes represented on the stage; very irregular, with many passages and corners; a winding stair rising out of the room with different landing-places. It was picturesque. Yesterday I came over here through the worst roads imaginable, and learnt that the Emperor had desired that I should be here; for, you must know, I am a

favourite with him as well as with his Minister. After long search, they found a room just built, the walls not dry, and without any fireplace. This delightful abode I am now come to inhabit. They have to-day put a fireplace—*i. e.* a stove—into the room for the first time. I have sent away all my baggage, and am come with Robert [his brother] only. As for Lamb, I have not seen him for three weeks; he has been amusing himself at Prague. I get on very well with all the Austrians. I am as great a favourite of Schwartzemberg as of Metternich.

We are on the eve of great events. A general battle is expected to-day or to-morrow. If the different armies act in concert, as it is intended they should, the issue cannot be doubtful. Our weather has been most dreadful; nothing but cold rains without any intermission for whole days; imagine the poor troops, without any cover of any kind; with nothing but green wood to burn, which the rain often extinguishes. Imagine an interval of dry weather, when with great exertion the poor wretches have contrived to dry themselves, and that the next hour they are as completely drenched as ever! Many of the troops are young recruits, who fall fast under this cruel trial. It is absolutely necessary to see before you can conceive the various miseries produced by this dreadful exposure to so severe a season. They say they could prefer the cold of Russia, yet the Austrian troops are in high spirits, eager to fight, and even gay, when it is possible. I dare not talk of home, yet I think of nothing else. No sooner is one affair concluded than another of greater importance starts up. I shall give the armies a chance of opening the Elbe before I decide. If we are clearly victorious, I think it cannot remain closed; and if it should once be open, I am freed from all anxiety



about the frozen Baltic. I suppose, if we are successful in driving Bonaparte from Saxony, we shall move on to Leipsic or Erfurth.

*Comotan, Oct. 10.*

The Emperor goes on to-day into Saxony, to Marienberg. The country into which we are going has been dreadfully exhausted; and with the prodigious numbers, French and Allies, now in it, one can scarcely imagine how they are able to find subsistence. . . .

I dined with the Emperor yesterday, and after dinner he talked very fully to me in private, in a very confidential manner. I find him a man full of knowledge of every kind,—a good Latin scholar, an excellent Italian, well acquainted with their authors and fond of discussing them,—and very knowing in all the affairs of his Government. His manner at first is awkward, and rather foolish, arising from great diffidence in himself; and, as foreigners seldom know more of him, he has been reckoned weak and ignorant; nothing can be more unjust. It is impossible to be more beloved than he is by his people. Their confidence in him is unbounded. In the midst of all their distresses they comfort themselves with saying “that Unser Franz will put everything to rights.”

#### TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Comotan, Oct. 12, 1813.*

I have had the honour of expressing my sanguine expectation of the speedy accession of Bavaria to the common cause. I have now the satisfaction of congratulating Your Lordship on the completion of these hopes. The Treaty was signed by Prince Reuss and General Wrede on the 8th instant.

General Wrede, at the head of 35,000 Bavarian

troops, is in movement on Wurtzburgh and Erfurth, for the purpose of acting in the rear of Augereau, and co-operating with the Austrian army. His Imperial Majesty, with the wisdom that has marked the whole of this transaction, has determined to place 25,000 Austrians from the army assembling at Znaim, Moravia, under the command of General Wrede; a circumstance highly flattering to the national feelings of the Bavarians, and which must tend to improve the good understanding already existing between the two countries.

The great object of General Wrede, if his plan should be approved, is to press on to the Rhine with as little delay as possible, and possess himself of the Tête du Pont at Mayence, an operation, as he conceives, of little difficulty, and which will necessarily cause the retreat of Bonaparte to be directed on Cassel. It is quite unnecessary for me to draw Your Lordship's attention to the infallible result of his powerful and well-appointed army, acting in the rear of the enemy, and occupying the whole country to the banks of the Rhine. Your Lordship will discern the vast importance of this arrangement, although it may be difficult at one view to embrace the whole extent of the varied prospect which it opens to us.

I am anxious to impress upon Your Lordship's mind a just notion of the merits of the Austrian Government in this affair. They first evinced the greatest wisdom by the moderation of their demands, and liberality of their promises; and then, as the timidity of the King, and the dubious policy of the Minister led Count Metternich to suspect an intention of some delay on their part, he sent orders to the Austrian Plenipotentiary not to protract the discussions beyond four-and-twenty hours, well knowing

that he might rely on the effect of this energy and decision. The event answered to his expectations; but while we give the Austrian Minister full credit for this combination of mildness and vigour, we must acknowledge that something is also due to the zeal of General Wrede and the spirit of the whole Bavarian army.

Lord Aberdeen then states that the Austrian Government had decided on recovering possession of the Tyrol, the Voralberg and the Unter Thal. These districts occupied, he says, it will give great facilities to future operations in the Italian Tyrol, the Valteline, the Grisons, and even the whole of Switzerland :

The French Minister was dismissed from Munich the day after the Treaty was signed, and the Chargé d’Affaires from Wurtemberg was recalled. It appears that the King of Wurtemberg is disposed to trust the fortunes of Bonaparte a little longer, besides which motive of action there has been some recent injury on the part of Bavaria, which he is personally disposed to resent. It is impossible, however, to doubt that, at the approach of the Allied arms, he will revert to those sentiments which he has so often expressed, and in such strong terms, to the Austrian Government.

Instead of the actual dimensions of the Bavarian territory proposed to be guaranteed, it is agreed that the new acquisitions should be contiguous.

The Confederation of the Rhine is formally renounced, and the entire independence of Bavaria established.

Austria engages to employ her good offices in bringing about an accommodation with England, and pledges herself for the adherence of Russia and Prussia to the Treaty.



## TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Marienberg, Oct. 15, 1813.*

I left Comotan yesterday, and came here in the morning. There was a good deal of snow, and the weather is become cold;—the road worse than can be conceived; a broken-up *chaussée*, full of large holes, which, being covered with mud, it is impossible to see. The road for the most part is through a mountainous district. There are large forests composed entirely of spruce fir; many of the trees of immense size. Sometimes the wood is beech. The Emperor left this place yesterday. I occupy the apartments in which he was. I shall go on to-morrow to Chemnitz, and follow him the next day to Altenburgh, where, I suppose, he will be. Before I finish this letter, most likely the campaign will be decided, for the armies are so close that the decisive blow must be struck immediately, unless Bonaparte retires entirely, which is not impossible.

I have often written to you of the necessary miseries of war, even in a friendly country; you may imagine they are not diminished now that we are in an enemy's land. The Austrians and Prussians behave well, but the Russians are not under the same scruples. They contrived to keep these horrible robbers, the Monguls, quiet, while they were in Prussia and Bohemia, by telling them they were still in Russia, and promising them full liberty to plunder when once they had passed the frontier. Brutes as they are, they latterly began to suspect the deceit, and now the poor Saxons suffer for it.

I am rather more reconciled to my situation; at least the extreme interest of the events about to take place, so near as to be within hearing, cannot but arrest the attention. If the travelling were a little

more convenient, the life would not for a time be unamusing. Saxony is so exhausted that provisions are found with the utmost difficulty. In this town nothing is to be found but potatoes and black bread. It is a pretty little town in which I am; the people decidedly favourable to the Allies. But in this respect I understand that Saxony is divided; however, we are not likely to meet with any inveterate hostility from the inhabitants.

*Chemnitz, Oct. 16.*

I left Marienberg this morning about nine o'clock, on horseback. A cannonade was heard soon after daylight, and it has continued all day. I had nobody with me but an Austrian Dragoon, consequently we could not speak; but you may imagine the ride to be rather interesting, with the sound of distant thunder all the way, and getting rather louder as we approached Chemnitz. The people here know nothing about it, but the report is, that the French have turned the left of our army about Wessenfels. We have received intelligence that it is the Emperor's intention to go to Zwickau, where we have accordingly determined to go to-morrow; the more so as we are here too near Dresden, and as the army is moving to the left we shall be very much exposed. My colleagues at the Austrian Court are the Prussian and Swedish Ministers, Barons Humboldt and De Bilke. The first is a very clever man, brother of the traveller. We hold consultations on our situation, which is far from pleasant, but we contrive to make it amusing.

The road through which I passed to-day was in some parts pretty. There was a very pretty village in the way, with a tremendous defile leading to it, called the Tycheppau. It would be destruction to a retreating army. Farewell to-night.

*Zwickau, Oct. 17.*

Nothing certain is known of the battle yesterday. The Commandant placed in this town when the Allies took possession of it has just been with me. He says that the battle was between this and Leipsic; and that the two armies nearly remained in the same positions which they occupied in the morning. He adds, that at first the Allies were pressed, and retired; but afterwards reinforcements enabled them to regain what they had lost. All this, however, is mere report, for he has received no direct intelligence. This is most extraordinary, for the distance between this and Altenburgh is so small that a man might have come twice in the time. He almost apprehends that some Corps of French have thrown themselves between us, and occupies the road. The Commandant has made all the provision in his power for the reception of the wounded, but he complains bitterly of the brutality of the Russians, who occupy the whole town, and will not make room, even by the removal of their horses and heavy baggage. No wounded are yet arrived, although the battle of yesterday ended about eight o'clock, and it is now more than twenty-four hours ago. I propose to go myself to Altenburgh, unless anything should make it quite impossible.

I came here on horseback. Although it rained, and the day was gloomy, I could see the country was very pretty; much resembling parts of England. The people fled at my approach: they had heard of the Cossack enormities, and my military appearance alarmed them.

*Altenburgh, Oct. 18.*

The battle the day before yesterday was most sanguinary; all those who were at Lutzen and Bautzen say that this battle was still more obstinate



and bloody. It had no decisive result, each army remaining pretty much where it was in the morning; but I do not think, from all the accounts, that we had the best of it: our left gained a little ground, and our right lost. The Austrian Cavalry behaved uncommonly well. Poor Merfeldt, an officer of the highest merit, is seriously wounded, and taken.

There was fighting all yesterday, and the whole of to-day the cannonade has been very heavy, with villages on fire. The action is not more than ten or twelve English miles from this, yet we cannot learn anything certain. We have had many reports, all favourable; among others that Leipsic is taken; but these rest on no authority, and unfortunately I have just heard that the Emperor is expected in a quarter of an hour; this looks very much as if the day had been against us. I arrived here late, with the Baron Von Humboldt, the Prussian Minister, and we had just agreed to continue our journey to-morrow morning; but as the Emperor comes to us we shall be saved the trouble; perhaps we shall have to follow him in a contrary direction.

The whole road to-day was covered with the wounded, of all nations. I have seen no official returns, but it is supposed that we lost, the day before yesterday, in killed and wounded 20,000. Of to-day, as yet I know nothing. The loss I speak of, is of Schwartzberg's army alone; no returns have been received of the loss of Blücher or the Crown Prince, who were both engaged.

This is a very pretty town, but you may imagine at this moment it is not easy to admire, much less to describe.

*Altenburgh, Oct. 19.*

The Emperor's baggage and attendants arrived last night, but, most fortunately, the battle took a

favourable turn towards the evening, which rendered his return unnecessary. The affair was most obstinately contested, but we obtained a decided advantage and the French are now retreating on all sides. The Saxons, Wurtemburghers and Westphalians come over to us in considerable numbers. I went forward this morning to see what was going on. The enemy is followed up, and I trust will suffer. We have not lost less than 30,000 men, exclusive of Blücher and the Crown Prince. Collorodo is wounded, but not severely; his loss would be very great. Bonaparte made offers of negotiation, which have been rejected for the present. I shall go to Rotha to-morrow, and perhaps to Leipsic; but I cannot learn that our troops have as yet entered the town. From thence, however, I shall find means to send my letter direct to Berlin.

The most brilliant prospect opens. If we go on with tolerable prudence, we must have him to the Rhine very soon. Schwartzenberg has shown great skill. The Emperor gave him the great cross of Maria Theresa on the field of battle. There are but four people who have it. He well deserves it.

*Rotha, Oct. 20.*

The Headquarters of the Emperor are still here, but he leaves the place to-morrow to follow the armies in pursuit of the enemy. Our success has been complete. Lauriston, Regnier and Bertrand are taken. Poniatowski is drowned. It is also said that Victor is drowned. Poles and Germans come over in great numbers, and the retreat of the French is conducted in great disorder. Bonaparte sent propositions of peace by Merfeldt, whom he allowed to return on his parole. He offered to give up all the Russian fortresses, and those on the Elbe; and

to give up Spain and Holland. The answer was, that when he was behind the Rhine it would be time to talk to him. The King of Saxony was taken prisoner in Leipsic. He has thrown himself on the mercy of the Emperors. Whether he will preserve his Kingdom by this act, or whether the Allies will be obdurate, I do not know. The Emperor went to Leipsic yesterday morning, and was received with acclamations. I believe he does not mean to fix his Headquarters there, but go from this to Zeitz. I shall go round by Leipsic.

*Leipsic, Oct. 22.*

This is the second day that I have been here, but how shall I describe the entrance into this town? For three or four miles the ground is covered with bodies of men and horses, many not dead. Wretches wounded unable to crawl, crying for water amidst heaps of putrefying bodies. Their screams are heard at an immense distance, and still ring in my ears. The living as well as the dead are stripped by the barbarous peasantry, who have not sufficient charity to put the miserable wretches out of their pain. Our victory is most complete. It must be owned that a victory is a fine thing, but one should be at a distance.

Farewell, my dearest Lady Maria. I go to-morrow the road to Jena.

Lord Stanmore writes :

During the short halt of the Allied forces at Leipsic an incident occurred which, as a conspicuous instance of Lord Aberdeen's placability and command of temper, even at that comparatively early period of his life, I cannot omit to notice. General Count Merfeldt was taken prisoner during the battle. He



was brought before Napoleon, with whom he had a most important conversation, in which the French Emperor stated the sacrifices he was willing to make for peace. General Merfeldt, who was released on parole, detailed the interview to Sir Robert Wilson, who, "writing under shell fire," forwarded full notes of it to Lord Aberdeen. This important missive was entrusted to Sir Robert Wilson's aide-de-camp, an honest blundering officer, very eager to be back in the thick of battle, and very sulky at being sent off the field as an *estafette* during its progress. Coming across another English diplomatic agent of high rank, before he had succeeded in finding Lord Aberdeen, and apparently thinking one diplomatist as good as another, he gave him the letter for Lord Aberdeen and galloped back at once to the battle. The accidental recipient of Napoleon's offers forthwith addressed a despatch to Castlereagh, conveying, as from himself, the information he had thus acquired, and instead of handing the letter to Lord Aberdeen when they met, as they did that same evening at Leipsic, retained it till after the messenger had started for England. He then forwarded it to its address. Lord Aberdeen, not knowing that he had been forestalled, himself wrote a despatch on the subject, and was then told that the news was already gone. The forwarder of the intelligence received the warmest thanks of the Government and a substantial reward. Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Wilson (who was not mentioned in the despatch sent) got neither. With most men this would have led to a violent quarrel. Lord Aberdeen felt that any such quarrel between two English Ministers, in the presence of strangers, would be out of place, and injurious to the public interest. He preserved uninterruptedly the most friendly and familiar relations with his colleague,

and the only expression of his feelings that he permitted himself was the addition of the following Postscript to a letter written in terms of accustomed cordiality: "I hope you repent your silence to me at Leipsic; it was not fair or friendly, and I am sure could not have been deserved by me."

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Dernbach, Nov. 1, 1813.*

We have to-day made a journey through the most beautiful country imaginable, woods, valleys and rivers all forming the most perfect compositions. The road, "if road that might be called, which road was none," was the most singular I have ever seen, and the most dangerous. We had a regiment of Hungarian Guards, who went before us, and by making bridges, throwing fascines into the morasses, and levelling the steep ascents, they contrived to bring us through. I am lodged here, at the butcher's, in a hole without a stove, and as the frost is pretty severe, the night will not be too agreeable. However, the cold has a good effect on the quantity of flesh and offal which is accumulated around me in consequence of the trade of the master of the house.

*Fulda, Nov. 2.*

We began our march very early this morning on horseback: Metternich, Merfeldt, the Minister of the King of Wurtemburgh, Count Zeppelin, and myself. We were ten hours on the road, and the whole distance we were enchanted with the beauty of the country, or rather they were, for it was quite impossible for me to enjoy anything which made it necessary for me to look around me. Soon after Dernbach we came into the great road, and here the horror of the scene began. The French had passed



three or four days before, and I assure you that the whole road to this place is scattered with dead. It is not like a field of battle, but single bodies lie by the roadside at such small intervals that we were scarcely a minute or two without a repetition of the object; these poor wretches had dropped down from fatigue, some actually in the middle of the road, and the people had not taken the trouble to remove them to the side, although they had all been not only carefully searched for anything of value they might have had, but the bodies were stripped of every vestige of clothing. There are still many of the stragglers wandering in the woods, who are brought in occasionally by the peasants, more dead than alive. I hear the road is much worse in this respect after this place, as it is reasonable to suppose from the increased fatigue of the retreating army.

We have received here the account of two very severe actions between Wrede and the French army. They have been most brilliant, as Wrede's force was much inferior. Poor Wrede himself was mortally wounded the second day, while leading on the troops to storm Hanau. We have taken about ten thousand prisoners, and it is hoped that the rear-guard may still be caught. The Bavarian Alliance was the work of Wrede, and his loss is very great. The Emperor instantly sent him the cross of Maria Theresa, in the hope that it might still be in time to afford him some satisfaction before his death. He also sent the assurance that his children should be well taken care of. Notwithstanding this success, and the incredible valour both of the Austrian and Bavarian troops engaged, Wrede's death will give a sort of false splendour to Bonaparte's account of the affair; coming so soon after that of Moreau, it will appear more wonderful than it is, for he exposed himself





JANE, CAROLINE AND ALICE GORDON.

Daughters of George, 4th Earl of Aberdeen, and of his wife Catherine, who all died in early youth.

From a picture by Sir George Hayter.



in a very injudicious manner. I believe we shall pass the scene of action, and arrive at Hanau the day after to-morrow. The town, I understand, is for the greater part destroyed. Among other pleasures of the journey are to be reckoned the infectious fevers in consequence of the multitude of French sick and wounded; we are obliged to arrange the places where we sleep according to the more or less of disease existing.

Bonaparte with his army passed through this town five days ago; they pillaged the town, but did not remain long enough to do more material injury. He had still above 80,000 men. The Emperor has been remarkably well received here: not only deputations from the town and all the neighbouring country, but the people are clamorous with joy. The whole town is illuminated to-night. The old Prince Bishop of Fulda is still alive, above eighty years of age. The people have all demanded of the Emperor that he should be reinstated; and they seem throughout this part of the country to be more exasperated against the French than anywhere else.

*Schluchtern, Nov. 3.*

We have come here over a road decorated in much the same manner as yesterday, but more abundantly. This town has been burnt and ravaged by the French in their retreat. The room I am in is pretty well, but the rest of the house is completely devastated; the poor curate, to whom it belongs, and all his family, are in despair.

The most affecting sight I think that I ever beheld, I have seen to-day. Houses were burning; the owners of these cottages in the deepest misery, and their children were playing around, and were quite delighted with the fire which consumed the



whole property of their parents, and condemned them to cold and hunger. Here is a mixture of innocence and wretchedness which goes to the heart ! I do not know when I have felt more severely the wretchedness of mankind.

The cause prospers, and I pray God we may be near to a termination of these horrors. It is said that Bonaparte himself is inclined to peace; if this be really so, we shall have no difficulty. The Confederation of the Rhine is now almost dissolved; every day takes from its numbers. The Prince of Hesse Darmstadt has abjured it, and has signed a Convention by which he throws himself on the mercy of Austria. There is now no State of any consequence remaining but Baden. I am glad to learn that some hopes are still entertained for Wrede's life, but the ball is not extracted, and as it has lodged in his body, there is no getting at it. He has behaved in a most heroic manner. He has issued an affecting address to his army. There were not 30,000 Austrians and Bavarians with him, and for two whole days they stopped the progress of the French army; the third day they passed, after suffering great loss. With the assistance of Platoff and Orloff Denisoff we have taken about 20,000 prisoners. The advanced guard of our army entered Frankfort this morning.

*Gelnerhausen, Nov. 4.*

We have travelled to-day through a most beautiful country; for the greater part it was valley, not wide, but very level, with a river running through it,—on each side the hills covered with wood, and running out into projections and knolls something like the Valley of Berry Pomeroy, in Devonshire, which you remember we saw together. This is a country of vines;—every cottage is covered with them, and they

are cultivated also on terraces on the sides of the hills, as in Italy. This town is completely devastated and half burnt. It is full of prisoners, wounded and sick, and the inhabitants are beginning to feel the effects of the hospital fever. It was intended to go to Hanau to-morrow, but they tell us it is quite impossible to lodge there, as every house is full of horrible objects, and the town completely sacked. I suppose the Emperor will make a sort of old castle, which is at no great distance from the town, do for his lodging, and we must find a village if we can. The next day he is to make a triumphal entry into Frankfort, where I have no doubt he will be well received. He has not been there since the day of his coronation, twenty-one years ago. If the inconvenience were less, and the horrible objects not so numerous, the life I lead would not be disagreeable. I perform the whole journey on horseback, in company with several persons more or less pleasant, of whom two or three dine with me every day. These two last days Metternich and Merfeldt have dined with me; and in such good society one forgets the fatigues that are past, or which are still to come. When Merfeldt was taken at Leipsic, he was several hours alone with Bonaparte. The account of this interview is extremely interesting.

I had looked to Frankfort as a certain place of rest, at least for some time; but it is now said that we are to be again in motion. The Emperor seems very much to wish to begin the Italian campaign without a moment's delay, and to put himself at the head of the army. If all endeavours at negotiation fail, I suppose this intention will be put in execution.

*Hanau, Nov. 5*

We have continued our journey through a most beautiful country, but I will spare you the description

of the road, and the appearance of the field of battle at the gates of this town. The town itself is half burnt, and the rest is a charnel-house. I went soon after my arrival to inquire after poor Wrede, having of course no intention whatever of seeing him; but he insisted on my coming into his room. They have some hopes of his life, but the ball is not extracted. I found him much too well, speaking with great animation and feverish strength. We were alone for some time; he was most impatient of the delay in extracting the ball; he wished to follow the army in a litter, as he could not bear being left here without even knowing what was done. He declared that if it had not been for the forced marches which compelled him to advance without a sufficient supply of ammunition, none of the French army would have passed. On the whole, as you may believe, it was a very interesting visit; but I have no hopes of this poor man; it appears to me quite impossible that he should recover;—the ball is lodged near the backbone, having entered in front, but they do not know how to get at it. The ball struck one of the lions' heads which form the clasp of his belt, and went through it. Wrede's loss will be very great, for he was the soul of the Bavarian Alliance, and indeed the author of it; besides which, he possessed the confidence of his troops in the highest possible degree.

I believe it is intended that we should go to Frankfort to-morrow. The Emperor is to make a grand public entry. Of course I shall accompany him. There is no doubt that he will be received with enthusiasm. He has not been at Frankfort since he was crowned there as Emperor. It is a glorious event for him to enter it again as the deliverer of the Empire. He has been remarkably well received in this town; to-night it is illuminated and the



populace are parading in all directions with a very fine band of music belonging to one of the Austrian regiments. They have just halted before my quarter, and have played God Save the King beautifully, with many acclamations.

*Frankfort, Nov. 7.*

The Emperor made his entry yesterday morning : he was on horseback, as were all of us who attended him. The Emperor of Russia, who had arrived the day before, came out to meet us about a mile from the town, and the Emperors returned together, with an immense number of officers, etc., attending them. We rode to the cathedral, where the Te Deum was performed, and then we accompanied the Emperor Alexander to his house. The streets, windows and even roofs of houses were crowded with spectators; the acclamations were universal, and it was easy to see that these unbought shouts came from the heart, and were produced only by gratitude for their deliverance. It is but seldom that the fate of kings is to be envied; yet I confess that the sensations of the Emperor of Austria, on entering this town, after all that has happened during his reign, are such as one would give a good deal to enjoy. In the evening the Emperors went to the theatre, and were received with the utmost enthusiasm. Every sentiment which was at all connected with the present state of things, and alluded to the causes of this great change, was rapturously applauded. It is a great comfort to be in a good town, after all the wretched places we have passed through. I am in an excellent house, and hope to remain some time, but it is very uncertain;—all my wishes tend towards England, but they talk of a winter campaign in the south. The Emperor will probably go, and it will certainly be a glorious and decisive expedition.

November 8.

I have found time to read *The Bridal of Triermain*, which you sent me; it is the work of a man of genius, and there are some very striking things in it, but full of faults and absurdities. I thought it sufficiently interesting, however, to be read through at a sitting. God bless you, dearest Lady Maria; take care of yourself, and give me a good account of your health.

## CHAPTER IV

### FRANKFORT TO CHATILLON (1814)

THE Headquarters of the Allied Sovereigns remained at Frankfort for more than a month. Lord Aberdeen had feared that it might become a Capua, but this was not the case. It was, however, a stage on which kings, generals and statesmen were even more crowded than at Teplitz. He was not a little disappointed by the essentially common-place character and moderate abilities of the leading actors, both civil and military, in the great drama in which he was called on to take a part.

The naïve and excessive vanity of Metternich, and the narrowness of his views inclined Lord Aberdeen in the first instance to take a lower view of his abilities than he did at a later period of the campaign, but while doing full justice to his extreme dexterity and instinctive perception of what was in any given circumstances possible, he persisted in considering that his reputation far exceeded his true intellectual rank, and that he was not, in fact, a very clever man. Lord Stanmore at this point of Lord Aberdeen's Embassy says :

It is easy to comprehend the species of intoxication which must have attended the vast successes of the Allies. After so many years of unchecked ascendancy on the part of Napoleon, the mere spectacle of his flight from German soil must have caused a singularly novel as well as satisfactory sensation to all good Germans; but the news which poured in from all quarters in succession,—the accession of Bavaria



to the Alliance, followed by that of Wurtemberg; the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine; the expulsion of the French from Spain; the defection of Murat; the revolt of Holland; the submission of Denmark,—were sufficient to turn the strongest head, and that it had that effect in many cases is sufficiently apparent from the correspondence which has been preserved.

It had no effect on the head of the young Ambassador, who still held that, on all grounds, peace should be made so soon as it could be made with security. That security he believed would be afforded by stripping from Napoleon all the possessions and influence which he had acquired beyond the natural limits of France; nor did he think that these limits could be infringed or diminished without the strongest probability of exciting on the part of the French nation an universal patriotic resistance, the strength of which had been underrated twenty years before, and might easily be underrated again.

Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart held other opinions, in which they were warmly supported by the rank and file of the regular diplomatic service, whose jealousy of the amateur Ambassador, who had never before held any diplomatic post, was not diminished by the extraordinary favour and confidence with which Lord Aberdeen was distinguished not only by the sovereign to whom he was accredited, but by those also with whom Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart were in ostensibly closer relation.

It was not with Lord Cathcart, but with Lord Aberdeen, that Count Nesselrode conferred on the subject of the general alliance, the arrangements with Denmark, the future operations of the Allies, and the propositions to Napoleon, of which, as well as of the proposals to Denmark, Lord Aberdeen alone of the English Ministers was cognisant, and which were only communicated to Lord Cathcart at a later period, and at Lord Aberdeen's express wish.

The portraits drawn by Lord Aberdeen of his colleagues at the Courts of Russia and Prussia are hardly flattering.

Cathcart is a man of very moderate talents, stiff, pedantic, and difficult. I rate Stewart's natural talents higher, but he is scatter-brained, obstinate, and wrong-headed. Although he has certainly good qualities, and we remain on the best terms, I have been deceived in him two or three times, and in cases which have contributed to affect my opinion of him materially.

These Ambassadors could not be expected to entertain a similar opinion of their own qualifications. Lord Cathcart was a much older man than Lord Aberdeen, and had been for some time an ambassador; Sir Charles Stewart was the brother of the Foreign Secretary; and it is not surprising that they should have felt, and to some extent resented, the manner in which they were set aside.

Lord Aberdeen was now earnestly looking forward to being released from this mission. It had already lasted longer than he had anticipated, and he was desirous of winding up his work and returning home. There was, however, a long period of strenuous and anxious work yet before him, and the correspondence with Lord Castlereagh and others best gives his account of the difficulties which had to be surmounted.

It has already been mentioned, that during the course of the battle of Leipsic, General Count Merfeldt was taken prisoner, and sent back to the Austrian army on parole by Napoleon. He brought from the French Emperor certain offers, which were rejected, and the battle was resumed. At the same time Napoleon had intimated he was willing to treat for peace, and to this it was necessary to give some answer.

It was decided between Prince Metternich, Count Nesselrode and Lord Aberdeen that the Count de

St. Aignan, the French President at Gotha, who had been taken prisoner at Leipsic, should be charged with the response to the overture. His release, both as a non-military man and a diplomatic agent, was in any case inevitable, and his natural departure from the Allied lines for France was unlikely to excite curiosity or suspicion.

M. de St. Aignan arrived in Paris on November 15, but it was not till the 28th that a letter from Maret, Duke of Bassano, arrived at Frankfort, proposing Mannheim as a place for a Congress.

Metternich at once replied that, while he was glad to hear of the pacific intentions of the Emperor, no negotiations could be entered into until the bases mentioned to M. de St. Aignan had been specifically accepted. This letter was answered on the 2nd December by the Duke of Bassano, who was then authorised to declare that "*l'Empereur, mon auguste maître, adhère aux Bases générales et sommaires qui ont été communiqués par M. de St. Aignan.*"

When Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart became aware of what had passed, the former was startled, and inclined to insist on the prosecution of the war without any negotiations, but Lord Aberdeen was able to induce him to take the same point of view as his own. Lord Cathcart was with Lord Aberdeen, but Sir Charles Stewart was unfortunately in Hanover, with the Crown Prince of Sweden, and consequently out of reach of Lord Aberdeen's personal influence. There were always persons who disliked Lord Aberdeen and resented his appearance as "an amateur" in the sphere of diplomacy.

Sir Charles Stewart was persuaded by these critics that Lord Aberdeen had abandoned the interests of England and of Europe, and that France had no maritime rights to which she could with justice pretend, and no "pretensions" which could be considered reasonable.

Sir Charles's temper was not improved by the naïveté of the Chancellor Hardenberg, who requested



him to write to his Government to express the wish of Prussia that Lord Aberdeen should be appointed the sole British Plenipotentiary in all matters affecting the Alliance generally—a request which Austria and Russia had more discreetly transmitted through their own Ambassadors in London.

Sir Charles did as he was asked, and, generously bore testimony to Lord Aberdeen's success, and the weight of his influence with the Ministers of all the Allied Powers.

Lord Castlereagh and the British Cabinet shared the views of Lord Aberdeen, adopted his reasoning, and approved his action. Sir Charles Stewart was told that he had omitted to perceive the essential difference between a basis of negotiation, and the terms of a definitive treaty. Lord Aberdeen was assured of H.R.H. the Prince Regent's full approval of the part he had borne in these delicate and momentous discussions, and of the willingness of the British Government to treat on the basis proposed, including therein the frontier of "the Rhine with such departure therefrom as may sufficiently provide for the independence and security of Holland," which country had in the interval successfully freed itself from French control.

## NEGOTIATIONS AT FRANKFORT

### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 8, 1813.*

M. de St. Aignan arrived here this day, and had an interview with Prince Metternich. Immediately after his departure, I had a long conference with the Prince and Count Nesselrode. It is determined that he should return to-morrow to France, and repair with all expedition to Paris, where it is said that Bonaparte now is.

A question arose between us, whether it would be proper to inform Bonaparte of any objects connected

with the French frontier, which might be open to negotiation. Count Nesselrode wished to state the terms of the Allies in the first instance as high as possible, and reduce them afterwards in the course of negotiation. I was of opinion that it would be the preferable course to state the terms as low as possible, and firmly to adhere to them. I told him that if the propositions were made with the hope of being accepted, common sense dictated that they should be rendered as palatable to Bonaparte as was consistent with the fixed views of the Allies. If the propositions were made without any such hope, I deprecated the whole proceeding, as being most erroneous in principle, and calculated to produce the greatest injury to the common cause. I observed that it would be much better to defer making any overture at all, if it was not thought that we were in a sufficiently commanding situation to make that which we were determined to press. In this reasoning Prince Metternich concurred, and it was at last agreed that the specific line of the French frontier towards Holland and Piedmont should be open to discussion, taking care to make the independence of Italy and Holland conditions of peace *sine quibus non*. Thus the matter stands at present, but I should inform your Lordship that M. de St. Aignan is not sanguine in his belief of Bonaparte being sufficiently reduced to accept our terms. I have urged the necessity of secrecy in the strongest manner, and have obtained a promise from Count Nesselrode and the Prince, that M. de St. Aignan should not see either of the Emperor, previous to his departure, as had been originally intended.

I took this opportunity of asking the Prince his intentions respecting the proclamation. He told me that he meant to publish it forthwith. On this subject I had thought a good deal, and had come to

the determination to dissuade him from adopting this measure at the present moment. I told him that a proclamation issued at the time of making propositions to Bonaparte could not possibly produce a good effect;—that, however moderate it might be, it would certainly tend to irritate Bonaparte; at the same time that from a decent regard to him, the Allies deprived themselves of the benefit of a vigorous and energetic appeal to the feelings of all those countries about to throw off his yoke. If he accepted our proposition, the proclamation was useless or injurious; if he refused to treat, we might compose a much better one than we could now venture to issue. Count Nesselrode appeared to assent to the propriety of my observations, and finally the Prince consented, at my entreaty, to delay the publication, in order to give effect to the mission of M. de St. Aignan, and then to act as circumstances might require. The fact is, that I am not sanguine as to the effect of this, or any other proclamation on the people of France; and if your Lordship will call to mind the evidence of history on these subjects, I think you will assent to the justice of this opinion. If the inhabitants of an enemy's country be well disposed, they will rise without proclamations, and I am not aware of any instance in which a people were ever moved by these means, who were not otherwise well inclined. The possible effect of such a measure in France should be a secondary object; but there is no doubt that it might be of essential service in encouraging the perseverance and fortifying the zeal of those countries who are struggling for independence. It is to them that we should show the absolute necessity of continued exertion, and should prove that the blessings of peace are not withheld from them by any hopeless projects of ambition, and unjustifiable views of foreign conquest.



I am happy to inform your Lordship, that notwithstanding the pacific overtures to which I have drawn your attention, the military preparations and movements continue with unabated activity, nor will any pause be produced in consequence of this or any other measure of the kind. The present plan for the continuance of the campaign, I shall have the honour of detailing to your Lordship in a separate despatch.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 8, 1813.*

It being determined to prosecute the campaign with the utmost possible vigour, various meetings have been held with the view of coming to a speedy decision respecting the best mode of carrying this determination into execution. The plan which has been adopted, subject however to further consideration, I have now the honour of stating to your Lordship.

It is intended that the Grand Army, under Prince Schwartzemberg, should march in the first instance to Basle, and enter Switzerland. From thence it is proposed to penetrate into France by Dauphiné and Franche Comté, the whole of that frontier being without any fortified posts. This movement will essentially aid the operations of Lord Wellington in the south-west of France;—it will secure the conquest of Italy, and, in general, promises the happiest result. Prince Metternich has despatched the Chevalier Lebzeltern to the Landamann, with propositions to the Swiss Government, which there is every reason to hope may prove successful.

A large force will be left to watch Mentz, Coblenz and such other places on the Rhine as may be necessary, making frequent incursions so as to keep the

enemy in constant alarm, and occupy a large portion of his troops.

It is proposed that the Prince Royal should descend on Antwerp and accomplish the conquest of Holland, threatening the whole of the French frontier in that direction. This is the outline of the plan, as it is at present, and bold and gigantic as it may appear to your Lordship, there will, I trust, be no deficiency of means to carry it into execution. It is calculated that at least 400,000 men will be necessary to give it a fair chance of success, and I am happy to learn that, notwithstanding the severe losses we have sustained in the course of the campaign, these numbers may be assembled in a short time. I shall soon be informed of the final decision which may be come to on this important subject, when I will not fail to communicate it to your Lordship. In the meantime you may rest assured that the evil of delay is fully appreciated, and that whatever plan may be ultimately adopted, will be carried into execution with promptitude and energy.

Among the brilliant assembly which Lord Aberdeen had found collected at Teplitz there was an English officer, Sir Robert Wilson, unknown previously to him except by reputation. With him Lord Aberdeen speedily contracted relations of close intimacy. Sir Robert Wilson had accompanied the Russian armies as English military representative during the whole of the campaign of 1812-13; and he was now temporarily attached, in a somewhat similar capacity, to the army of Prince Schwartzemberg. The absence of Tory prejudices on Lord Aberdeen's part astonished him, and while at Frankfort he wrote in his diary:

By principles Aberdeen belongs to *us*. He is a Liberal politician, and a man of high independent spirit, with a very reasoning mind, in which there

is no inextirpable prejudice. I should have thought Lord Grey and he would have been inseparables; and they would have been if accident had favoured nature and brought them more in communication.

The testimony of so strong a Liberal as Sir Robert Wilson to the breadth of Lord Aberdeen's views is remarkable, but though valuable, it was no doubt accentuated by gratitude. Sir Robert Wilson had been temporarily attached to Schwartzenberg's headquarters from the moment the Austrian army had joined the Allies. By the time that Lord Aberdeen arrived at Teplitz he found that, thanks to Wilson's previous service with the Russian army, and intimacy with the Emperor Alexander and with Blücher, he was on a footing with all the divisions of the Allied force which made him specially useful as a medium of communication between them, and gave him an influence and position which no man, however able, coming newly to the scene could hope for a long period to possess.

The officer whom the English Government had chosen to act as military attaché with the Austrian army was not an able man, while of course he was totally unacquainted with those among whom he would be called on to act. He was the eldest son of Lord Westmorland, Lord Burghersh, then a young soldier and without distinction. Lord Aberdeen knew and liked Burghersh, but at once saw that not only was he not the man to replace Wilson, but that the substitution of the one for the other had in it something which bordered on the ludicrous. He therefore strongly urged Lord Castlereagh to leave Sir Robert Wilson where he was, and to send Lord Burghersh with the army of Marshal Bellegarde to Italy.

Lord Aberdeen wrote in vain. Sir Robert Wilson's Liberal politics were fatal to him, and Lord Castlereagh replied, with something like a sneer, that Sir Robert Wilson might enjoy the confidence of other European Governments, but he did not possess that



of his own; that, as Lord Aberdeen wished him to continue with the Austrian armies, he might be allowed to do so; but only at the headquarters of Marshal Bellegarde in Italy, as Lord Burghersh was already appointed to the more important post at the headquarters of Prince Schwartzberg, and could not be superseded. To Lord Aberdeen it only seemed natural and right that the officer of experience and influence should remain at the post where that knowledge and influence were most usefully exercised, and that the new-comer should go to Italy. His diplomatic colleagues thought it amazing that the consideration of efficiency should induce him to prefer a man of Whig opinions, a military man without birth or connection, to a man who had no other merit than that of being a supporter of the Government and the son of a Cabinet Minister.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 11, 1813.*

I wish to state, without reserve, the impression which this affair of Burghersh and Wilson has made on me, and the light in which I consider it. Schwartzberg and Metternich have frequently spoken to me on the subject; the first has written to me in the most pressing manner, the latter has told me that he had it in command from the Emperor to express his sense of the great services of Wilson, and to state his wishes that he should continue with the army. Schwartzberg told me that he would as soon part with *Radetzky* the Quartermaster-General; that Wilson was admitted to all their councils, and that they had the most entire confidence in his zeal and talents. His services in the field have been most conspicuous; on the 16th at Leipsic, the day was saved by the brilliant conduct of the Austrian cavalry under Nostitz, which Schwartzberg declares to be chiefly owing to the intelligence and able dispositions

of Wilson. In short, to enumerate his military services would be endless. Great as they are, they fall short, in Schwartzberg's estimation, of those which he has rendered out of the field. From his intimate knowledge of the Russian and Prussian armies, and the great respect invariably shown him by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, he is able to do a thousand things which no one else could. He was the means of making up a difference between the King and Schwartzberg, which was of the utmost importance. In short, I cannot possibly be deceived; I hear it from morning to night, from all nations; and I am perfectly persuaded there is no man in existence who unites in the fourth part of the degree, the love and admiration of the three armies. What Stewart is with the Prussians, Wilson is with all. If Lord Wellington himself were to come here to-morrow, I should not think the evil less in the view I take of it. I have declined, both to Metternich and Schwartzberg, to do anything officially: I have always said you were the only judge, and that your instructions were final. But under the circumstances, and with reference to the paragraph of your instructions which relates to consultation with me, I thought it right to give my opinion to Burghersh that it would be more for his own comfort, as well as for the good of the public service, that he should go to Italy; that I did not wish Wilson to have any appointment, but to remain as he is under Cathcart, and continue to report to him. That he (Burghersh) would still be the only accredited agent from England; and that the services of Wilson, which were so eminently conspicuous, might still be afforded, although without the satisfaction of any official acknowledgment. With respect to going to Italy, as Burghersh informed me he would



be d——d if he did, there the matter ended, and now a new view of the case opens.

When you mentioned the appointment of Burghersh, of course I imagined that the Emperor was going to remain at Prague or Vienna, and the army act at a distance. But when the Emperor is with the army, and I with him, the appointment of an independent military officer assumes another character. The splendid services of Wilson silenced all observations; as yet, his character has been unofficial, but from his claims, I should have had no other feeling but pleasure in his official appointment. I do not wish to say anything of Burghersh: I have known him long, which it is not necessary to do to know him well. Of course I need say nothing to you on this subject. But you will imagine that it cannot be particularly agreeable to me to have *him* the author of the only official account of what I myself know, and that through *him* only is it to be made known to the public. I am resolved to follow the Emperor into the field on all occasions. I have put on a red coat, and I think this part of my duty. I am in daily communication of the most confidential nature with Schwartzberg and Radetzky, and I do not know why it is to be resigned. If you fairly consider this question, I think it will appear to you that the circumstances of an independent military appointment with this army, in the present situation of things, cannot lead to much good. In Italy we really want somebody; but as Cathcart is here, of course as a military man, he will take care to give you the necessary details. We should not interfere together in the least. Pray do not imagine that I wish to disparage Burghersh. I have no such intention. It is true that I am strongly impressed with the merits of Wilson, but I only receive this impression from the united voice of



every one whom I approach. I never saw Wilson before coming to Germany; I had prejudices against him; but, on my honour, I have seen nothing to blame and everything to commend. The whole sum and substance of my wish is this;—that Burghersh, or the accredited person, should go to Italy, where he may really be of use, and that Cathcart should have the management of this army as heretofore; so far as military affairs are concerned. Wilson might remain in his former situation under Cathcart, if it is wished that Burghersh should be the only accredited person.

I hear Burghersh has expressed regret at not being presented to the Emperor, as he was prevented from going to Hocheim, and seems to think I have been dilatory. Burghersh arrived here on the 7th, and at seven o'clock on the 9th the affair at Hocheim was undertaken. I have unremittingly applied for his presentation, and it has been done this day, both to the Emperor and to Schwartzemberg. I had requested Schwartzemberg, whatever he might feel, to receive him as the person accredited by the British Government; and as a matter which was interesting to myself. You may depend on it I shall not fail to do what is so obviously my duty, while he remains. But I do wish you would take the whole of this affair into the most *impartial consideration*. I am quite sure that you will not wish to act unjustly to any one, or even unkindly.

The only thing I have to implore is that poor Wilson may not suffer still more, by my exertions. There has been nothing in the shape of intrigue. He trusts that if, from the peculiar circumstances, he is obliged to go home, you will not impute it to any feeling of hostility, but, putting yourself in his case, that you will make allowances. He will, I

believe, remain until we hear from you; I will try if possible to find some temporary employment for him, in order to soften matters in appearance,—and give some sort of reason for a step which will excite universal astonishment.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

*Frankfort, Nov. 15, 1813.*

I thank you very sincerely for your kind and considerate attention in giving me an account of the children, at a time when you thought it probable that I should receive no other. Thank God, they are well; it almost gives me as much pleasure to know that they are loved. How I long to see them! and see you all again. Yet I do not know what to say about the time. You have done perfectly right in reminding Castlereagh that diplomacy is not my *métier*. I have done the same myself. But I do not know how I shall get away from my friends here. The other day, I just hinted the possibility of it to Metternich, and he does nothing but exclaim at my thinking of such a step at such a time. The fact is, I am very well placed here; it is likely that I do some good but it is certain that they are all well pleased with me. The other day I overheard the Emperor talking of me to his brother, the Grand Duke of Wurtzburg, in terms quite incredible. I have no reason to complain of my situation with respect to the Russians and Prussians. I have had many marks of kindness and respect both from the Emperor and the King. Notwithstanding this position, I look anxiously towards England, and without speaking positively, I rather think that I shall go home when once the Elbe is fairly opened.

This town is more splendid than ever it was during the time of the coronation of the Emperors. A most



numerous assemblage of Princes are collected, for the purpose of uniting their means against France, and joining in our alliance. I will give you the names of the principal persons at a dinner from which I am just come, with the Emperor of Austria. The Emperor of Russia, King of Prussia, King of Bavaria, Grand Duke of Wurtzburg, Grand Duke of Baden, Grand Duke Constantine, Prince Royal of Prussia, and Prince Henry, Hereditary Prince of Wirtemberg, Duke of Oldenburgh, Prince of Coburgh, Prince of Hesse, Schwartzenberg, and Metternich. There was also your old friend Prince Reuss, and his brother. This, you must allow, if not an entertaining, was at least a brilliant assembly. We have parades and reviews every day, and, altogether, it must be confessed, that for a short time this town would be agreeable enough. I think our only chance of ultimate success is to follow up, without intermission, the blows which have already been struck. Of course, Castle-reagh will show you both my despatches and my private letters, which will put you in possession of my views on many subjects. They are not half so full as I could wish, but I have little time, and less inclination, to write long discussions, the greater part of which are inapplicable before they arrive at their place of destination.

The present plan of the campaign is formed on a gigantic scale, but I think we have the means of carrying it into execution. Not less than 600,000 men will be united in one combined plan of attack. The Prince Royal (between ourselves a Jacobin quack) will attack Holland and the north of France. Blücher will observe the fortresses on the Rhine, and do what he can. The great army under Schwartzenberg will penetrate through Switzerland. The army of Italy, under Bellegarde, as soon as it is set free, will cross



the Var, and entering the south of France, will communicate, if possible, with Lord Wellington on its left, and Schwartzenberg on its right. If half our plan succeeds we shall do very well.

You will, however, learn that an overture has been made by us. I have highly approved of it, but I fear it will come to nothing. The only way, however to give it a chance of success is to assume the most threatening attitude of hostility. This vast coalition is strongly cemented, but still we are not to calculate on its eternal duration; as long as we are united, we must carry everything before us, but when the seeds of dissension begin to appear, our weakness will only be the greater from the extent of our mass, *mole ruit suâ*. It is by vigorous exertion that we shall be kept together; so long as we are active, and above all, so long as we are successful, we shall not quarrel.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

Frankfort, Nov. 15, 1813.

This is a pleasant town, very rich, notwithstanding the repeated vexations of the French. It is now very gay. I do not suppose, in the history of Europe there were ever so many Kings and Princes collected together. I dined to-day with the Emperor of Austria; I think there were four-and-twenty persons, and I did not see more than half-a-dozen who were not either sovereign Princes or their immediate connections. When one tells the coachman to drive to the Emperor's, he asks *which* Emperor? It would appear remarkable if we were not so much used to it. In the morning we have grand military parades and reviews.

You are very good to write me so long a letter. I shall hope now to hear something of our friends, as they will be in town for the meeting of Parliament :

the Levesons, the Harrowbys, the Devonshires. Lady G. of course will be in town. Merfeldt will go to England very soon. Everybody says Countess Merfeldt is a most delightful person; she is still at Vienna, but she will go too. I hope you will see a great deal of them at the Priory. As to myself, I cannot determine what to do. My present notion is to be in London by the end of January, but this is very uncertain, and need not be mentioned. My having hinted here the possibility of my departure has caused the greatest possible consternation. The Emperor has used very strong language about it. Certainly my position here becomes more enviable every day, yet I am sure you know very well how little I am consoled by all this for my absence from England. I shall be able to form a more decided plan in a few days; but if my stay is prolonged, it will be more on account of the very unusual kindness and desire of the Emperor and the principal persons here, than from the wishes of Ministers at home. I will tell you my reasons another time, but never couple Bernadotte with Moreau, who was a man of English simplicity, sincere, sensible, unaffected.

I will add a few words before the messenger goes. We have not many English. Vernon has gone from Prague to Vienna. Lamb is amusing himself at Vienna. I am alone with Morier. I hope Robert will soon return to me, he was a great assistance, and will be a great loss. The Bathursts I knew were very fond of him.

*November 17.*

You see, I boldly make plans, yet it will not be easy to go. Yesterday the Emperor was speaking to Schwartzberg about me. Schwartzberg had heard there was some notion of my going, and mentioned it. The Emperor was astonished, said he

would not hear of it, that he liked me more than anyone he had ever had with him, and that we must absolutely finish the war together. He said, "I shall very near break my heart if he goes." This *façon de parler* is certainly very strong, but it is pleasant that they think it worth while to use it. I believe Merfeldt will go very soon. I shall regret him very much, but he will do so well in England that I ought to be content.

At any rate, we shall not remain long here. The Emperor is impatient to be gone; he told me to-night that he wished very much that we were again fellow-travellers, even in bad roads and bad quarters. There never was a man to whom so much injustice has been done as the Emperor of Austria. He is not only a most excellent man, but one who judges well, and who possesses the most honourable feelings. I have had a hundred instances which have contributed to place him in a very high point of view. You know well enough that I am not much *ébloui* by the splendour of sovereigns, therefore you may believe what I say.

Let me hear from you soon, and tell me news, anything will do. I have received Miss Hollway's letters and the children's—theirs would be delightful, if Miss Hollway did not improve the style. Farewell, dearest Lady M. It is very late; I have been sitting up to finish some despatches, and am quite worn out. God bless you.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 12, 1813.*

I have received last night your private letter of the 15th, and the despatches. It is almost ludicrous, but more really distressing that our communications should be so dreadfully slow. Almost all your speculations, which are most just and excellent, are



rendered useless by our present situation. However, as the Prince Royal has probably opened a channel through which we may send to Heligoland, I trust it will improve. Long before this time you will have been convinced that you have done both Metternich and me injustice. Bavaria does not stop short at a simple junction, but is employing her whole means in the cause. My Treaty will have convinced you, when you compare it with what your friends the Russians and Prussians have done, that you may rely on my representations respecting the Austrian Government. Do not think Metternich such a formidable personage; depend on it, I have most substantial reasons for knowing that he is heart and soul with us; but, my dear Castlereagh, with all your wisdom, judgment and experience, which are as great as possible, and which I respect sincerely, I think you have so much of the Englishman as not quite to be aware of the real value of foreign modes of acting. Put yourself in Metternich's place. He had an Austrian game as well as an European to play. To enter into the war with most insufficient means, to deliver himself, even if successful, into the hands of Russia and Prussia, could not be wise in the Minister of this weakened but still mighty empire. He has come forward as the head of the German body should appear—the leading power—and the effect has been decisive. Now do not be afraid of me. There is a sort of half confidence and intimacy which Ambassadors may enjoy, which perhaps is likely to mislead. My intercourse with Metternich is of another description. Living with him at all times, and in all situations, is it possible I should not know him? If indeed he were the most subtle of mankind, he might certainly impose on one little used to deceive, but this is not his character. He is, I repeat it to you, not a very

clever man. He is vain; but he is a good Austrian. He may, perhaps, like the appearance of negotiation a little too much, but he is to be trusted. I consider it as fortunate that I have been personally agreeable to him, because it has given me many personal opportunities of studying his character in detail, and I hope it has not perverted my judgment. He is, at this moment, the main support of warlike measures. But by this time I feel sure you will have much changed your opinions.

Merfeldt, with all his love of England, is a little restive about leaving the army at this critical moment. He will certainly go, however, and I am sure, if you consider this appointment rightly, it is decisive as to the feelings of Metternich. He (Metternich) is tremblingly alive to the feeling of the English public. He told me that he had just desired Gentz to write an article, with the view of having it inserted in an English newspaper, which should explain his policy (his *marche politique*) to the English people. He told me, if he had time, that he would write it himself. In the Treaty, perhaps, you did not observe that he had scratched out the enumeration of the Legion of Honour from among his titles. He told me he thought it a respect due to England, which was not to be observed towards Russia and Prussia. In short, Metternich is of all others the man I should choose to deal with, and should do it without fear. Stadion was thought of for England. His health is not very good, but in other respects I told Metternich that I greatly preferred Merfeldt.

The King of Bavaria comes here to-day. The Grand Duke of Wauburg is come. The King of Wurtemberg is coming. We shall have a prodigious influx of Princes. But we must not pause. A few days may be allowed, for the troops require it. But we must



be active, and leave this place with all its comforts. You may be surprised at one in my situation, but I have made good my relations with Schwartzberg and Radetzky (the Quartermaster-General) in such a manner as to have a voice even in military operations. You have nothing to fear; the whole is planned on the most enlarged and vigorous line of policy.

We are anxious for the result of St. Aignan's mission. I have kept back the proclamation until we hear. I hope the secret is well kept; but the only objection I can have to the undertaking is the possibility of its checking our projects respecting Denmark and Switzerland. The Prince Royal's attitude will do much to decide Denmark. I wish you would examine that question fairly. I have been led to do a good deal in this business; but I hope not injudiciously. I shall be glad of your approbation and instructions.

I write as if I looked forward to eternity, but it is only the peculiarity of my situation which makes it tolerable—and that does not bring me my children. You know my bargain? When I look back on what I have done, I am not aware of anything to reproach myself with, and I feel perfectly confident that I have laid a foundation of friendship and cordiality between the Governments of the two countries which may be easily preserved, and turned to the best account. If we are to have negotiations, and you choose me to stay, I will do my best, and with the utmost pleasure, but if the war continues, I almost think of home. Parliament has met, and although I am not a regular performer, that is the scene after all. To assist you, I would do this or almost anything else, but I lean towards home. Stewart and Cathcart have their stars and crosses. My rewards are at home, which, if no other, are at least great in the renewed love of my friends, and I trust your approbation.



Half a dozen persons supped with Metternich last night; I met Nesselrode there: we had a long discussion about the Treaty of General Alliance. He makes great difficulties, and at all events is decided as to having it confined to the four principal Powers. This, I think deprives it of half its value. He proposed, however, that at the renewal of their subsidiary Treaty they would do what you wished separately. He put me in possession of all his views about it. I afterwards talked a good deal to Metternich on the same subject. He has no objection to sign it to-morrow. I explained the difficulties of Nesselrode. He said that at my desire he had frequently discussed the subject with him. He added that, if I wished to pass this Treaty, he would *answer for making* Nesselrode agree to it at last. "And now, my dear A., make my compliments to Lord Castlereagh, and ask him what is the next proof of our zeal and confidence which he requires." I have always assured him that, if you were aware of the real circumstances of the case, you would be perfectly ready to give him full credit.

I too entirely agree with you in all your views of popular feeling, and the value of popular exertion, not to have frequently urged this topic with Metternich. The measure of all others on which he most values himself is precisely of this nature, and is in rapid progress. The spirit which has been excited in Bavaria and Wurtemberg by the wise and moderate conduct of the Austrian Government is beyond belief. The Tyrol is always sure, and I hope that everything is going on well in Switzerland. He will succeed in placing between France and Austria, on that frontier where she is most vulnerable, 400,000 armed men, animated with the best spirit, and with all the enthusiastic feeling of German independence. Their

attachment to Austria is the grand feature of which he has good right to be proud. When you recollect what Bavaria and Wurtemberg have been, and see what they are doing precisely in the way you desire, we must admit that he has performed a service which Europe will have reason to acknowledge, I trust, for a very long time. Baden, notwithstanding the connection with Russia, has thrown itself into the arms of Austria, and the same spirit is kindling fast. I have frequently discussed the best method of embodying and availing ourselves of this spirit, and have even made some propositions on the subject. In the Austrian empire there is no *deficiency*.

LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH (Private)

Frankfort, 17th [Nov., 1813.]

A most unfortunate event has occurred in the capitulation of Dresden, under the circumstances with which it has been accompanied. Klenan certainly went beyond his powers in the conditions which he agreed to. Schwartzberg has determined not to ratify the capitulation, and the garrison is to be replaced, and everything put as near as possible in its former condition. Still this is so unfortunate an affair, and the enemy will so well know how to turn it to account, that I am not sure if it would not have been better to fulfil the conditions. Being on that footing of intimacy with Schwartzberg which enabled me to venture, I spoke to him on the subject. He received the observations with the utmost kindness, but said it was too late to do anything, that he had considered the matter coolly, and that he was convinced he was justified in equity and military law in not ratifying the act. Of course I did not press the matter further. In the evening I saw the Emperor; he came up to

me, and talked with me a long while on the subject. He said that he entirely agreed with me in the view that I had taken, and had spoken to Metternich accordingly. He said they had persuaded him to agree to the course that had been adopted, but that it was against his judgment. He said a hundred things about the interest which I had taken in his honour, and altogether spoke in so cordial a manner that I cannot do justice to the satisfaction which he exhibited. I am sure that Schwartzenberg, whether right or wrong, has decided on the most honourable motives, and we must now make the best of the affair that we can. Whatever be the result, I have certainly gained great credit with the Emperor, Schwartzenberg and Metternich for the manner in which I have spoken on this subject.

If you think it right to mention it to the Prince, I wish you would have something done in the way of a compliment to Schwartzenberg. If you give the Emperor Alexander the Garter, who, by the way, will never wear it, you may certainly offer some testimony to the man who, for the first time, has beaten Bonaparte fairly in a great battle, and to whose skilful combinations, and consummate prudence, we owe our success. If the Prince was to send him two or three good horses, with a little parade, and some allusion to the battle of Leipsic, it would be well received. It would have a good effect in the army, and would tend to do away with that suspicion of Russomania with which we are infested. Pray think of this.

I hope your parliamentary business gets on well; with the Allies on the Rhine, I think the opposition cannot give you much trouble. I hear reports of Canning coming to the Foreign Office, and you going



to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; of course you will tell me if there be any foundation for this. I have not believed it. Wessenburg will immediately have instructions to release you from silence respecting the secret articles of the Treaty. Metternich seemed to doubt if *all* could be divulged; I do not see why. If it is of use to you in Parliament, as it must be, you may consider yourself at liberty to publish what is essential.

You will have a project from Cathcart, in lieu of the general Treaty of Alliance. Perhaps you may accede to it; but if not, I think I can answer for making Metternich carry us through. I am very anxious to have your *real and genuine* feelings about the Swedish business. Nesselrode spoke to me about it last night in terms of bitter regret. I have held but one language, the necessity of adhering to agreements already entered into. But tell me on the whole, what is likely *to be* your view of this subject. I have invariably most stoutly defended your policy in entering upon the agreement you did, and have always maintained that it was *at the time* most wise and necessary, and devoid of all injustice, but it is quite impossible to pretend to hold up the character of the Prince Royal, whose quackery is in every mouth. Stewart will let you into all this; and Pozzo di Borgo, who is here, and who would not stay with him, or return to him, is still more *acharné* against him. Vincent's report, which Metternich shows me, speaks the same language.

Metternich is happy in being the first to acknowledge the independence of Hanover, and requests to have Hardenberg as Minister; Hardenberg I think a very jolly good sort of fellow; one who will never do harm, and who may be easily managed.



CATHERINE HAMILTON, COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.

Eldest daughter of John James, 1st Marquess of Abercorn, married the 4th Earl of Aberdeen, July 28, 1805, died February 29th, 1812.

From a miniature reproducing the portrait (now at Haddo House) by Sir Thomas Lawrence, R.A., who alluded to it in a letter to Lord Aberdeen thus:  
"The picture of Lady Aberdeen is like music in my mind all the time."





## LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Frankfort, Nov. 24, 1813.*

I cannot let a messenger go without conveying to you at the same time a repetition of my love and interest. I have little else to say to you; the long time since I have heard from you makes me still more anxious to know that you are going on well. I trust that Brighton has done all that you hoped from it. Your last letter to me was written soon after your arrival, on the 24th of last month.

We are here much the same as we have been; nothing new, no alarms, no cannonades, and even no new kings; I believe we have exhausted the whole stock. We are kept on the alert, however, by this dreadful fever, which is gaining ground very fast. I have had two servants taken ill already; if it continues, the mortality will be as great as if we suffered from the plague itself.

At last my groom and horses are arrived from England; they have made a great circuit. My only pleasure here is riding every day for about an hour. I generally pick up a pleasant companion. I see a great deal of Pozzo di Borgo; you know the Emperor has made him a General; we ride together frequently, and he is followed by a Calmuck on horseback, instead of a groom, as is often the case here. Pozzo's Calmuck is the strangest animal it is possible to conceive. With his flat, Chinese face, he has a sort of languishing air that is irresistibly comical. He is scarcely human, but he dresses himself like Stefano and Trinculo in the *Tempest*. Being a great robber, as they all are, wherever they sleep on their journey he steals blankets, carpets, etc., but his great delight is old tapestry, of which he has a great collection. He makes it into pelisses and trowsers for himself, and astonishes Pozzo

and all of us by appearing every now and then with a couple of great peacocks on his back, or a cupid, or a goddess, or some pastoral scene !

We have such an assemblage of all ranks and all nations, that it would be very interesting to be here as a traveller ; but with the drudgery to which I am condemned I taste it very little.

I trust that a period to my slavery is approaching. I sometimes think that the best way would be to go to England on a sort of leave of absence, and preserve the power of returning, in case I could not remain at home.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 25, 1813.*

I write in Metternich's room in order to be in time for the courier who goes to-night. A letter from the Duke of Bassano has arrived, proposing a Congress, and mentioning the town of Mannheim as the best place, which may be rendered neutral, and English couriers allowed to go through France by Calais. He says that a peace "sur la base de l'indépendance des toutes les nations, tant sous le point de vue continental que sous le point de vue maritime," has always been the wish of the Emperor. Metternich's answer to this letter will refuse to open any Congress on the part of the Allies before the general basis, already proposed, is accepted ; the letter of the Duke of Bassano says nothing on this head. You are not to understand that the unofficial conversation with St. Aignan embraced the *whole* basis on which the Allies were willing to treat, but those conditions only which more immediately concerned France. Nothing was said of the Duchy of Warsaw. The Prince Royal has been alarmed because Norway was omitted ; but it was for the same reason. I defer any longer statements on this subject for want of time.

The Duke of Bassano says that the Emperor "conçoit un heureux augure du rapport qu' a fait M. de St. Aignan de ce qui a été dit par le Ministre d'Angleterre." I have already stated to you all that passed, and the precaution I took that no unfair inference should be drawn from the expressions relating to England which I found written before my arrival at the meeting with St. Aignan. But in order that no mistake should exist, and that everyone should know the real circumstance so far as England is concerned, I will give an official statement to Metternich on the subject, and restate all that passed. I think you will approve of the decision of not closing with any offer without a clear understanding beforehand. There is the best inclination both with respect to measures of energy in the conduct of hostilities, and the terms of peace to be exacted: no pause will take place in the one, or abatement in the other.

It is with the greatest satisfaction that I announce to you the realisation of my promises respecting Metternich. He is just returned from an interview with the Emperor of Russia. The Treaty of General Alliance *will positively be made forthwith*. The difficulties have not been few or slight, but M. has made a point of bringing your unjust suspicions of Austria to shame. Now, pray observe, these are not fine words only, but *facts*, and pretty important too. I wait for your *amende honorable*. There is only this difference, that the Emperor wishes the Treaty should be executed in London. To this there can be no objection. . . . Some person will be sent to London immediately to explain all matters. It will probably be Pozzo di Borgo. Farewell. I hope everything meets with your approbation. As far as I am able to perceive, there is no just reason to complain.



## LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD CASTLEREAGH

*Frankfort, Nov. 28, 1813.*

I must first refer to my private letter, written the day before yesterday, and especially to that part of it respecting the General Treaty. I was so happy in the thought of its being done anywhere, that I, perhaps, too eagerly caught at the proposed arrangement of its being signed in London. Cathcart having informed me that you had, in some of your despatches to him, objected to its being sent back, and Stewart having strongly represented the whole proposal as unsatisfactory, I gave the subject a good deal of reflection, and resolved to renew my endeavours to have it executed here. Accordingly, I have told Metternich that he must undo everything which he had fixed with the Emperor Alexander. I told him that I could not understand the *reason* of the reference to London. If his policy was crooked, and his motives dishonest, the course was intelligible, but if he was sincere, as I hoped and believed, there could be no possible reason to transfer that to Wissenberg, Jacobi and Lievin, which we could do equally well here. He represented the difficulty of dealing with the Emperor Alexander; but I told him fairly that, with his views on the subject, and his influence with the Emperor, I should consider the fate of the Treaty as the test of his honesty. He protested against this criterion, but promised to do his best, whenever the Emperor returns to Frankfort.

I have not the details for a despatch, but letters came from Letzeltern yesterday. He represents the Swiss Government as not being willing to move before the entrance of the Austrian troops into the country; but they are well inclined, and the landwehr, in particular, have given great satisfaction. The people

are still more enthusiastic than had been expected, and are with difficulty restrained until the arrival of the troops. In particular, the Bavarian Minister has done some mischief by a premature zeal in the cause. The change is so satisfactory that one may almost pardon the error.

Of course you will have the details of the important events passing in Holland, from Thornton and others; but I wish to recommend to your attention the state of the Low Countries. I really believe a little money and some arms would give you a chance of the fleet at Antwerp—from the state and disposition of the inhabitants, the insurrection is likely to spread over the whole country. I have desired them to send a person immediately to England, worthy of credit, from whom you may receive the necessary information on this subject. To a considerable extent, the plan of general rising appears to be organised, and, in particular, the higher ranks are deeply involved.

Having given you, in a few words, what I know of public views, I must now tell you, that after much consideration I have thought it to be most wise and useful for the public service that I should go to England. A few conversations will put you more fully in possession of my view of things here than a thousand despatches. If the business of the General Treaty is once settled, there is no particular object in sight; although there is a general complication, which can better be developed by words than in any writing. It is a feeling of this kind which has induced the Russians to determine to send Pozzo; I shall probably go at the same time. I have spoken to Metternich on the subject, who has no objection to it, but is only anxious that I should return to them again. I should not have ventured on this step, had I not recollected the entire discretion with which you

invested me at my going out, with respect to it. No specific occupation of importance presents itself to detain me, and it is my sincere conviction that I can be of more use to you by oral communication at the present moment than in any other manner whatever.

I have now only to request that you will have the goodness to give directions for a frigate to receive us, Pozzo and myself, either at Cuxhaven or Bremerkhe, whichever may be thought most expedient, or even at Heligoland if necessary. Pray have the goodness to give the orders as soon as ever you receive this letter, for although it is *possible* we may be detained, it is most probable that we shall set out in a very few days.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Frankfort, Nov. 28, 1813.*

I have now nearly determined to go to England immediately. It is of the utmost consequence that Government should have the information which I shall be able to give them; and a thousand despatches would not put them so perfectly in possession of my views as a few conversations. The two Emperors will not hear of my going, except on the condition of my speedy return, but this must be decided by what I find in England.

Not a word of news from you; I am quite sick with hope long deferred. I cannot imagine what has happened. I trust you are well and happy.

Our affairs here are prosperous; everything goes on well. The revolution in Holland of course you will hear of daily. You may expect very soon to hear of one in Switzerland. In short, everything seems to justify the speech of Talleyrand to Bonaparte, who, when he asked him before the beginning of the campaign, what he thought of the appearance of



affairs, said, I think I see "le commencement de la fin."

It is difficult to say with what delight I look forward to the moment of meeting you all. Yet I shall not go to England without apprehension.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD ABERCORN

*Frankfort, Dec. 4, 1813.*

We are going on well. The revolution in Holland has given the finishing stroke to the existence of Bonaparte's power out of France, for I consider the affairs of Italy as nearly settled. I have an enterprise of the kind in hand which I trust will turn out well. I am sure it ought to do so.

It was my determination to go home immediately, even at the risk of returning, but I find it to be impossible; I am so much wanted here, indeed, I may almost say so necessary, that I do not know how to get away; however, it must end soon. I am in as great favour as ever with the Emperor. He has just given me the Order of St. Stephen. A very different thing from the Russian St. Andrew and the Prussian Black Eagle, as probably you may know. Of course I shall not be anxious to accept it, but the offer will do nearly as well. He is going to send the great cross of Maria Theresa to Lord Wellington. We are the only Englishmen to whom these orders were ever given.

Your observation respecting the instructions for the general Treaty of Alliance, in which Lord Cathcart is first named, did not escape me, and I have represented it to Castlereagh. The fact is, that Ministers wish to show this marked preference to the Emperor of Russia; and, as a consequence, Cathcart must in this business be the principal person. But I can as

little permit this on the part of the Emperor of Austria as on my own. It may produce the most mischievous effect. Considering what the Emperor is, and his situation, it is quite preposterous to put forward these odious preferences. God knows we have heart-burnings enough to quiet, without their being fomented by our own Government. With respect to this Treaty, however, I have the consolation of knowing, and of its being admitted by my colleagues, that if it is done at all, it will be owing to me. I am not certain about it, but I hope we shall be successful.

Of Austria I am sure, and Russia, by the means I have employed, may yield. Stewart has had no difficulty with Prussia. If we can conclude this alliance it will be a great stroke. But I must again refer you to my despatches and letters to Castlereagh for all this.

I hope you are tolerably well employed at the Priory. This season is not favourable to your *beautifying* occupations, yet it has its charms too. In the spring I still hope that you will get a good house in town. I will not despair of joining you, but my plans for a little while longer must be uncertain. We have here pretty much our usual quantity of Kings and Princes, but the place is dull enough. There is a very good opera, the orchestra excellent, to which I often go; after which, I go every night to Metternich's, where there generally are about a dozen persons whom I like to see. We have great dinners, but as we dine at three o'clock the day is terribly shortened. The sickness is great, it is a sort of jail fever, which is very fatal. Three of my servants are ill of it, one is near dying; but among the upper ranks I do not find it common.

Among the charms of this place, I must not omit the Emperor of Russia's sisters, who are lately arrived.

They are both pretty and agreeable, but the Grand Duchess Catherine is delightful.

MR. J. W. WARD (LORD DUDLEY) TO LORD  
ABERDEEN

130, *Park Street*, Nov. 24, 1813.

Though I don't hear from you, which indeed I don't deserve to do, I read the extracts they publish of your despatches with great pleasure, both on account of the matter and of the manner. They are, in my judgment at least, exactly what they should be; and Lord Harrowby tells me that what does not meet the public eye is equally well written. I hear, too, that you are extremely liked at the Imperial Court, in short that you are a very model of an Ambassador. This is no more than I expected; still it gives me the most sincere pleasure to see you filling so great and conspicuous a station with the approbation of all the world.

One is quite overwhelmed by the magnitude of the events you have lately witnessed. In your place I should die of hunger and fatigue, for I should be unable to eat, drink, or sleep in such a succession of delightful wonders; and then comes the counter-revolution in Holland to crown all. With union and perseverance on the part of the Allies (and I trust there is no doubt as to either), Europe will in a few months be free. Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands remain to the tyrant: but Italy seems going, and I trust that the Low Countries and the Cantons will soon follow. When it is a question of treating for peace, I do earnestly hope that France will be required to abandon not only her conquests but her plunder. I mean that part of it which consists in the monuments of the fine arts. The removal of them from their birthplace was at once the most



infamous robbery and the most cruel insult. Their restoration would not only be a magnificent and gratifying instance of public justice, but contribute, perhaps, more than any single thing to prevent the French from instantly taking upon themselves that metropolitan air which was so long and so foolishly acquiesced under by the rest of Europe, and which is well known to have contributed so much to the extension of their dominions. I promised to write to you from Bowood, and, as is usual with me in such cases, failed of my promise. The truth is, that I can hardly bring myself to imagine how the scenes at which you are present should not destroy all interest in what passes here, and without supposing any want of feeling in you. Indeed, I am sure that nothing can prevent you from being anxious as to the health and welfare of your friends, but as to the ordinary topics of correspondence, our riding, and walking, and talking, and dining, and writing; these must seem quite ridiculous. You will feel for a long time as Gulliver did after his trip to Brobdingnag.

I had a very pleasant ten days with Lord Lansdowne. He lives, as you might imagine, handsomely and sensibly. The place, too, is fine, though the old timber has been cut down. He is stout, and cheerful in his own quiet way. He has a constant succession of pleasant company at his house, and they say his wealth is quite enormous. In short, except His Majesty's Ambassador to the Imperial Court, I take him to be the most heart-breaking individual to Rogers now in the world. When I was there Rogers himself—Mackintosh—Romilly—Dumont—and Madame de Staël—of course great literary and philosophical discussions, but very gay and pleasant. Dumont, who is the champion of the *utilité* against the sublime principles of morals that Madame de Staël

is more desirous to introduce than ready to explain, and who is a lively as well as a clever man, made excellent sport with her in half-serious argument. Your countryman, Sir James, prudently endeavoured to keep well with both. By-the-bye, I don't think you saw a great deal of Mackintosh before you went. I cannot say how much I am delighted with him, or how much I grieve at his hard lot. He brought back from India the usual liver complaint without the usual wealth. His income is very confined, and his constitution has sustained so severe a shock that I fear there is very little chance indeed of his being able to complete the great work he meditates on the history of this country. Some less extensive designs he may, perhaps, execute. He has, I understand, a "Dialogue upon Eloquence" three parts finished, of which those to whom he has read it speak very highly, and the next number of the "Edinburgh Review" is to contain a very long paper upon Burke, which I am most anxious to see.

We are threatened with several new books. All the ladies take the field the same year. We have had Madame de Staël, and we are to have Madame d'Arblay and Miss Edgeworth. In the way of metaphysics we are to have a ponderous quarto from Dugald. Lord Byron, too, hardly a month after he had done adding to *The Giaour*, has come out with an entire new poem, *The Bride of Abydos*. It contains some very fine passages, but I doubt whether it will have such brilliant success as *The Giaour*. Talking of the noble author puts me in mind that we have made a sort of engagement to go over to Holland together as soon as the ports are open, which will probably be in a few days. The Continent is now brought so near us that it would be a sin to miss the opportunity of taking a look at some part of it. I

should like to proceed to Germany, but I am not sure that I shall be able to stay long enough. However, I rather flatter myself I shall. I am very eager for this excursion. If we see nothing but Holland, it will be amazingly well worth while, and when we are there we are on the high-road to everything, quite ready to avail ourselves of the chapter of accidents.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD HARROWBY

*Frankfort, Dec. 6, 1813.*

DEAR LORD HARROWBY,

I cannot allow our friend Pozzo di Borgo to depart without giving you some intelligence of myself; always supposing that this will not be entirely uninteresting to you. My desire to return to England augments daily, and I had nearly resolved to go with Pozzo. I thought it right on reflection to wait for a letter from Castlereagh. Personally I have nothing to complain of; on the contrary the Emperors are equally kind to me. I believe I enjoy the confidence of both their Ministers in a very considerable degree. Nesselrode is a very honest man of moderate abilities, but he is in fact Minister. The Emperor governs entirely. My opinion of Metternich may probably have excited some surprise and have been received with incredulity, but I have endeavoured to judge fairly and not to deceive myself. Metternich is a politician, and a foreign politician; you therefore know my opinion of the *métier*, but I really can discover no just ground for thinking him worse than his neighbours. Let me judge by facts and not by professions. I have obtained from him everything for which I have asked, with the exception of commercial advantages, which, however, with respect to Colonial produce, are less necessary in Austria than elsewhere. Your friends the Russians have not done



near so much, and I much fear this mission, which of all other events is the most important, is due to none of us, unless it is to you. By the way, I cannot too much praise the foresight and promptitude of Government, in all that you have done. If you are just and moderate the whole may be brought to a happy issue.

Notwithstanding the multitude of Kings and Princes we have here, the town is dull. A few men who are conspicuous of talent and acquirements afford agreeable society, but the time is chiefly taken up with ceremony and parade. I live a good deal with Stewart, who is a most amiable person, and possesses good talents. He is a little quick, and, like me, has not been much accustomed to his trade. We do admirably well together.

ABERDEEN.

*Freiburg, Dec. 24, 1813.*

MY DEAR LORD HARROWBY,

The question now is about my future plans. I had written to Castlereagh to state my intention of going home immediately, but I determined afterwards to wait a short time longer.

It is a little hard after so very explicit an understanding as I had with Castlereagh before leaving London, that I should be blamed for profiting by that understanding. It is possible that my going may be an inconvenience, but really I never imagined that it was necessary for me to remain until it should be perfectly indifferent whether I went or not.

There was one only motive of sufficient importance to induce me to remain, which was the conduct of the negotiation, whenever it should be entered into with Bonaparte. As I was informed both by Metternich and Nesselrode that they had expressed a wish I should be charged with this affair, it appeared

probable that such a joint application might be worth attending to, at any rate, if not, it became doubly incumbent on me to go home when so very different an opinion was entertained by the two leading Powers here and my own Government.

I confess that the importance of the charge and a kind of feeling that I should act well with those employed in the great work of negotiation led me to desire, even ardently, that after having in appearance played a second part through the war, I should at least possess a prominent situation before the conclusion of peace, if ever it should take place. Castlereagh knew this long since; but the question is very much changed now. Private reasons make me much more indifferent to anything of this kind, and proportionately anxious to go home. To you, who know how small a share of my mind is occupied by political events of any description, I may confess that the alarming account of Lady Maria's health is a motive of action stronger than all others. If it be true that she is not destined to survive more than a few months, I solemnly declare to you that I had rather be the means of contributing to her happiness and tranquillity during the dreadful time than preserve the crown on the Emperor's head.

For God's sake lay aside your character of Minister. As my friend, recollect what I have enjoyed and what I have suffered. See the person nearest in blood, worthy in every respect to be the sister of the most perfect being whom God in his power ever created—see her reduced to the state in which she is, and then, following the dictates of your own heart, tell me what on earth can stand in competition with her claims on my love and attention. I know she desires to see me again; and I am sure you are not the person to blame me

for listening to such a call, for I am sure you can appreciate it. I have only within these two days known the real situation, and have not before felt thus strongly, although always desirous of going home. As I have expressed myself decidedly on the subject of negotiation, and as a delay might be most pernicious, in the event of Castlereagh's demanding my services they shall still be given; but there can be no possible reason for my continuing the routine of business at this Court if there should be no such reason to detain me; especially when there are others to hasten my departure besides that which is all powerful.

If a time of peace should be restored, I do not think there would be much difficulty in arranging in a satisfactory manner the subject on which you last wrote. It is only a few months since Metternich has obtained so decided a command in the Austrian councils. His views on the commercial question on which you insist are liberal and enlightened, and it is his intention to place this matter on a new footing whenever the urgent occupation of the moment will permit it.

I have nothing to say of public affairs, but I know you do not view a beautiful country without interest, and perhaps may be as well pleased to hear something of the appearance of the Black Forest as of the caps and gaiters of the Hungarian grenadiers. It is impossible for you to imagine anything more beautiful than the neighbourhood of this town. We are on the skirts of the Forest, which is magnificent. . . . I look on Swabia as the very cradle of Germany. It is here that the Ghibellines and Guelphs took their origin; it is here that celebrated and unfortunate family extinguished by Charles of Anjou long reigned; here were the early possessions



of the House of Hapsburg, and here is still the castle, inhabited formerly by the remote ancestors of the Prussian family.

My brother tells me you see a good deal of Madame de Staël. Of course you have read her *Allemagne*. I think she describes the Germans well. They are a good people, and although it appears to me that she has exaggerated their qualities, on the whole her description is sufficiently accurate. There is a good deal of her book I scarcely understand, for although I am something of a metaphysician myself, she sometimes soars above me.

Jan. 17, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD HARROWBY,

It has given me most sincere pleasure to find that Lord Castlereagh is himself coming to Headquarters; independently of the great public benefits to be derived from it, I have an individual satisfaction, because it enables me to remain long enough to be of some use to him in whatever he may undertake connected with the interests of Austria. This Power, having wisely during the contest sacrificed everything to the grand object in view, is now coming more forward every hour.

I have now determined not to do the thing by halves, but to stay as long as I can be of use to Castlereagh.

Against the enemy everything goes on well. You will see by the official details how we are situated. All enthusiasm in France is extinct, and to every useful purpose French preponderance is overthrown. But the maddest projects are abroad—which if persevered in may restore France, and ruin ourselves. What do you think of the Emperor of Russia having gone yesterday morning to the King of Prussia before he left this town, and told him that he should not halt before he got to Paris and had

proclaimed Bernadotte Emperor of France? The King was petrified with astonishment, but asked him if he had not better wait for Castlereagh's arrival, who was expected daily. The Emperor said that he went on purpose to avoid him. This is almost incredible, but it is true. I have known this intrigue between the Emperor and Prince Royal for some time, but as Castlereagh was to arrive so soon I have not yet detailed it to him.

The motives of this transaction are clear enough—Metternich has discussed the plan, and he told me that although the Emperor of Austria would never give the least opposition to the restoration of the Bourbons if they were demanded by the people of France, he would fight as long as he had a man left to prevent his daughter from being turned adrift in order to make way for Madame Bernadotte.

If this state of things should continue, you see to what it must lead us. The arrival of Castlereagh is therefore most ardently to be desired; indeed there are many questions of a most difficult nature which the tone assumed by the British Government will go far to decide. You may mention this if you please to Liverpool and Bathurst, but for the present perhaps it should go no further.

*Basle, Jan. 21, 1814.*

I read your letter with great pleasure, especially your philippic on the stupidity of the Allies for observing the neutrality of Switzerland. It has been a question of extreme difficulty, and, situated as things were, the resolution adopted was highly creditable to the energy of the Austrian Government. The matter is still in dispute. The settlement of Switzerland is as difficult as that of the whole of Europe—especially when the Jacobin or Mediation Party has so powerful a position. . . .

I begin to suspect that the only way to be fully approved of at home, is to live in a state of constant jealousy and doubt with those with whom one has to deal abroad. At the same time I must say that the only real satisfaction that I have experienced since leaving England has been from the goodwill of the Emperor and the principal persons with whom I have had to act.

With respect to the system of preference, I have to say a few words. It is only with reference to the common cause that I consider the policy of Government as objectionable, at least to the extent to which it is carried. Austria and Russia are equally indifferent to me; but I only mean to observe that if you carry the system too far you may have reason to repent it, because the power is at the present moment lodged with one of these States only.

This preference, which is said not to exist, but which is shown by a thousand nameless, indescribable circumstances, tends more or less to produce an unpleasant feeling where it is most to be avoided. It is entirely with a view to the union and efficacy of the whole confederacy that I press this. If States are governed with little wisdom, they are influenced also by little motives, and the Chancellor might have added this to his observation. It is therefore to avoid an impulse being given to the principal member of the Alliance by these slight causes which might be fatal that I blame your policy.

Do not imagine that I wish for any essential change; far from it. You are much the best judge of the general policy of Great Britain at the present moment; but I pretend that without sacrificing anything you may do all that is necessary by a little more care and attention. If you ask me what I mean by talking of the want of it, I will tell you of



one instance among a hundred, of a slight neglect which produced a considerable effect. It was a paragraph in the Prince's speech in which the accession of Austria and Bavaria was lumped in the same sentence. A Power to whom you avowedly owed the accession of Bavaria, and who felt that they had prevented you from being driven over the Niemen after the defeats of Lutzen and Bautzen, might naturally feel a little hurt at this cavalier language.

I tell you fairly that the most difficult and incessant labour I have had since I came to the Continent has been to soften these feelings, generally I hope with success, but still they break out as fresh occasion is afforded.

It is with unmixed pleasure that I look to the state of military transactions—everything prospers and there is nothing whatever to prevent us from being at Paris whenever we please. I do not think, however, that we shall ever get there, as I am convinced that unless circumstances change very much, Napoleon will agree to any terms. The recent transactions with the French Princes are embarrassing, and if it is intended to press them on the Allies, I fear it will be attended with great difficulty, from the indisposition of Austria and the personal hatred and contempt of the Emperor of Russia. I daresay the accounts you receive of the disposition of the French people are correct, but it appears to me that you draw from them a consequence scarcely warranted if you suppose that the partisans of the Bourbons are active or formidable. On this side it appears that the greatest apathy prevails respecting their ruler, and that they only value him who will give them peace.

Ever most sincerely yours,

ABERDEEN.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO LADY MARIA HAMILTON

*Carlsruhe, Dec. 15, 1813.*

It must appear rather extraordinary to you, as it certainly does to me, that while I think of nothing but going to England, and write to you of nothing else, still I am increasing the distance of my journey; and every day adds to the difficulties when I begin to retrace my steps. I am sure, my dearest Lady M., you will only think that all this augments the irksomeness of my situation, and will not the less believe my wishes to be sincere. The fact is that I must wait for despatches from Castlereagh; and while I am here, it is as well to be placed where the duty can be best done. However, I confidently trust it will soon be over, and that I shall still be able to join you by the end of next month.

We are now on the road to Switzerland; we shall take up our quarters at Freyburg, or some place in the neighbourhood, where we may be conveniently situated for negotiations with the Swiss, without violating their neutrality.

I left Frankfort the day before yesterday, and went to Darmstadt. I was lodged in a country house about a mile from the town, which put me in mind of the Priory; not that it was very like it, but it was a large mass of building of the same colour, and something in the same style; the country, too, although more level, was not unlike; but after all, a very slight indication is sufficient for me on those occasions.

Darmstadt is a very pretty town, regular and well built. From thence I came last night to Heidelberg, through the most delightful country it is possible to imagine. The road was directed along the foot of a range of hills, not high, but varied in form, and

beautifully scattered over with woods, vineyards, villages and gardens.

On every eminence where there ought to be a castle, we always observed a ruin of some kind, not often, it is true, large, or even picturesque, but invariably so well placed as to add a great interest to the scene. To the right of the road the plain extended to the Rhine, fertile, well cultivated, and adorned with villages and woods. The road itself was a continued avenue of magnificent walnut trees. The whole of this lasted for about forty miles. I do not think that I ever saw anything in Italy which united so much of beauty and fertility, a luxuriant vegetation, and an endless variety of feature. The timber is certainly finer than in the more southern countries.

When I say that the castles are not large, or even picturesque, I must except that of Heidelberg, which is both, in an eminent degree. It is in the best state in which a ruin can be found. Magnificent from its preservation, and beautiful from its destruction, I am not sure if I do not prefer it to anything of the kind I ever saw. The situation is very grand, the distant views are perfect compositions of their kind, and the details of old gardens, terraces and fountains give quite an air of enchantment to the place. I obtained some engravings in the town, which may serve to give you a very imperfect notion of the building. I have said so much of the castle, that I had almost forgotten to mention the wonder of which everyone speaks, viz. the great tun in one of the cellars. Although I defy you to conceive anything like the castle, you may well imagine a barrel able to contain 200,000 bottles of wine, and so I say no more of it.

I am come to-day to this town, through a very



beautiful and well-cultivated country, but not equal to the Bergstrasse, through which we passed yesterday. The road, which is very good, is still an avenue of walnut trees, until about three miles from the town; from which spot to the great gate is an avenue of the most enormous Lombardy poplars I ever saw. The effect is singular and rather handsome. This town is like an immense toy; the palace is a central point, from which the streets diverge like the sticks of a fan. It is a town such as children would build, if they had the means. As it is clean, and the streets wide, it has a pleasant appearance, but the uniformity is fatiguing. The Grand Duke is much liked, and the Grand Duchess also is popular. She is handsome—a niece of Josephine.

There is a finer race in these parts; the young men are well looking, and the women, if very young, not amiss. Some of the old men are strange monsters, with a sort of settled contortion of visage, looking as if their pipes grew in their mouths.

I like the Germans better on acquaintance. They are a good people. The Emperor is as good a man as any in his dominions, in all the essentials of goodness; a good husband and father, a man of truth and honour, and, as a Sovereign, benignant and just. But it is not among the conspicuous persons of the Court that I should wish to judge. In the sort of life I have led, it has been my chance to be the guest of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, one night sleeping in a palace, another in a cottage. I have been generally a forced guest, it is true, and might, therefore, have found the worst side apparent. I have, on the contrary, always been struck with the goodness, the bonhomie, the honesty of all ranks. Madame de Staël describes them well; poetically, but well. I have not yet had time to finish the

second volume; but I certainly agree with you as to what she says of their literature, so far as I can understand it; for it is a little rash to pronounce at once, without a knowledge of their language. At the same time, I have always understood that German and English were easily convertible, and that our respective translations enable us pretty accurately to judge of each other. It is clear, however, that Madame de Staël does not enter fully into the spirit of English composition, nor can she understand it. But is not this the case with all nations? There is a degree of intimate knowledge which a stranger never can attain to. Besides which, there is a national feeling, a sort of attachment, which you may call prejudice, but which, even in this case is, perhaps, a virtue, by which we are rendered partial judges. It is like a face which is dear to us; when we know and love the mind, we cannot bear the frigid criticisms of a stranger on the features by which it is exhibited. I by no means deny the justice of her general remarks on English literature; but to tell you the truth, I take the liberty of receiving all criticisms of this sort with great indifference. To feel strongly, to enjoy fully what appear to me beauties, is the first point, to make others feel and enjoy them too augments the pleasure twofold, provided they are persons whose sensations are worthy of exciting interest. But I must have done for to-night; all this I could have told you just as well at home.

*Freyburg, Dec. 18.*

The day before yesterday I went to Rastadt, yesterday to Offenburg, through a fertile but uninteresting country. At Offenburg we came to the edge of the Black Forest; we have skirted it all to-day. This town is situated at the entrance of a



gorge leading into the forest, and is backed by fine hills covered with wood. I have long wished to see the Black Forest, I have always heard much of its picturesque beauty. . . . It seems very beautiful, but I shall explore it well while we remain here. I am glad to see that there is a fair proportion of fine oak and beech wood, and that it is not only the eternal Scotch or spruce fir. The hills are rocky, and plenty of torrents, so I shall have employment for some days. I even think of going as far as Schaffhausen to see the falls of the Rhine; it is not more than forty miles distant.

I hope I do not tire you by writing of nothing but the appearance of the country and beautiful scenery. We are old fellow-travellers, and you know there is nothing which at all times has so benignant an influence over me as the enjoyment of nature. It is so pure and unmixed, it is so perfectly within our power at all times, and in all places, and it is so intense, that I think those persons who do not possess it are much to be pitied. They have a sense the less.

I hope the next messenger will bring me my release. I am very much inclined to agree with Lord A. in the view which he takes of the subject. I have no doubt Ministers will wish me to stay; and I shall have a real difficulty in leaving my Austrian friends, who will do everything to detain me—but they shall not prevail. Metternich tried to influence me the other day by declaring that the Emperor would not receive another Ambassador. I have more reason than ever to be satisfied with the kindness and attention of the Emperor and the principal persons here; but however gratifying it is to me, and however irresistible it might be to others, you know very well how little effect it will have in detaining me when once I think it possible to begin my journey.



Farewell, dearest Lady Maria; I will not suppose it possible that I should be out of England by the end of next month. Take care of yourself, and for God's sake exert yourself as much as possible not to increase that state of nervous irritability from which you suffer so much.

It will have been seen by Lord Aberdeen's correspondence that there had been considerable uncertainty as to the number and position of the negotiators on the part of Great Britain, at the Conference for peace to be held at Chatillon.

Lord Castlereagh, finding that neither Prince Metternich nor Count Nesselrode proposed to act themselves as negotiators, decided that he himself would not take that position. His first intention was to employ Lord Aberdeen alone as the British Plenipotentiary. When this became known to Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart, and, moreover, that Lord Aberdeen attended meetings of the Ministers of the four Powers, from which they were excluded, their discontent was expressed in so violent a manner that Lord Castlereagh was obliged to give up the idea and to effect a compromise, which as usual was unsatisfactory to all parties concerned.

Lord Castlereagh begged Lord Aberdeen, while himself remaining the "sole efficient person" to make all reports and be the sole mouthpiece and generally the negotiator, to consent that Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart should act along with him as assistants in a sort of Cabinet. Lord Castlereagh told Lord Aberdeen that, although one of the disappointed negotiators was his own brother, he should have thought nothing of their dissatisfaction, had it not been for the opportunity of serious mischief which might be given by the insinuation that the appointment of the Ambassador to Austria as English Plenipotentiary showed a disposition to disregard the interests of Russia and Prussia, and he begged Lord Aberdeen, in language of the most

earnest entreaty, to agree to an arrangement which he felt he could not require, and could hardly expect him to accept.

His compliance with Lord Castlereagh's wishes was not approved by many of his friends, and Lord Abercorn was most characteristically vehement in his expressions of disapproval. The particular line of criticism which he took, that Lord Cathcart and his extensive connections would arrogate all the praise, and that if unpopularity was incurred Lord Aberdeen would be involved in it, did not in any great degree disturb Lord Aberdeen in his decision to accept arrangements which would make his work as negotiator more troublesome than had he been the sole spokesman for his Government. What most concerned him, and what his clear insight obliged him to see, was the fact that peace was not likely to be the outcome of the Conference.

The negotiators arrived at Chatillon on the 3rd February, 1814, and almost immediately held their first conference with the Duke of Vicenza. This meeting was chiefly occupied by matters of form, but at it Caulaincourt showed an unexpected readiness to meet the wishes of the Allies. This readiness of Caulaincourt was due to the fact that after the battle of La Rothière, Napoleon had given him *carte blanche* to sign any agreement which would avert the advance of the Allies. Sincerely desirous of peace himself, Caulaincourt was most anxious to conclude an arrangement before these full powers could be recalled.

#### FROM LORD ABERDEEN

*Paris, May 15, 1814.*

DEAR LORD HARROWBY,

At last there appears to be a reasonable prospect of our speedy departure. Robinson, who will take this letter, carries over the draft of the Treaty. I hope your deliberations will be prompt.



I cannot imagine why Castlereagh wished so much that we should be united with him in this business. It can be of no use to him, and is not very agreeable to us,—however, as he insisted, my stay was in consequence prolonged.

Of course you will hear from Castlereagh of the unreasonable conduct of the French Government. The difficulty of treating with them is as great as with Bonaparte. The Marshals into whose hands the King has unfortunately very much placed his interests give him the worst advice. The most absurd language has been held. National honour—resistance, war has even been threatened. The Duc de Berry is, I believe, at the head of all this nonsense. It has been resolved to adopt a new tone in our proceedings with the French Government; which I have no doubt will bring them to their senses. Probably no real difficulty will be found in bringing the matter to a conclusion.

I think Castlereagh understands the Imperial Philosopher very well, and among the great qualities of Lord Wellington I cannot but admire the penetration which led him at once to detect the falsehood and duplicity of his character. Before Lord Wellington left Paris he said to me, “Of all the persons I have seen I like your Austrians much the best.” You may believe I do not quarrel with him for this, I am sorry that the Emperor of Austria will not go to England, because, as my only desire is that everyone should be really known, I feel confident that he would leave a favourable impression.

At the same time, knowing as he does the feelings which prevail in England, I am not surprised that he should decline the risk of mortification incompatible with the dignity of his situation.

He will send Metternich to make his excuses, and will return to Vienna himself. As for your



friend the Crown Prince (Bernadotte), he has made a poor figure here as elsewhere. You must have had a difficult task the other night in the House of Lords, at least so far as he was concerned.

The meagre reports of the newspapers do not enable me to learn much of what passed on that occasion. His admirer, Madame de Staël, arrived the day before yesterday; I have not yet seen her, but suppose she will be at Talleyrand's to-night. Her presence where there is so much room for criticism appears to be generally feared—and the terrors of the poor Princess of Benevente are very comical. I propose to see a good deal of her; indeed she will be very attractive compared with the stupid society of this place. I am wrong in talking of *society*; it can scarcely be said to exist, at least for strangers. Talleyrand's house is open every night; the possessor is well worth knowing and some clever men are to be met with. For the rest, Lady Castlereagh's suppers after the play might just as well be in St. James's Square, except that they are attended here by Englishmen of a worse description, and scarcely by any women at all.

You ask what I think and guess of the present state of things here. The first feeling indisputably is increased contempt and aversion for this despicable crowd. Their baseness is only equalled by their arrogance, which, notwithstanding their degradation, is still unabated.

With respect to the Bourbons, there is little enthusiasm among any class. In the army, as you suspect, it is still worse. The King flatters the Marshals, who *possibly* may be sincere in their attachment; but the troops, who are not aware of any great political advantages which they have gained, have not sufficient philosophy to enable them at once to

forget their old leader. So many years of conquest and glory are not to be forgotten even by the prospect of tranquillity, which, after all, is not a state much coveted by a soldier so long as he is capable of activity. I think there is a great probability of protracted troubles in France, which possibly is the best security for the peace of her neighbours. I am sorry for the difficulties of the Government and personally for the King; but the great mass of the nation can do nothing better than destroy each other.

You will be surprised at my rancour, but you must see this vile people in their present state before you can comprehend that the feeling is natural.

Perhaps in the summer you will think of coming here to look at the fine things collected by Napoleon. The increase of magnificence since the Peace of Amiens is prodigious. I have been strenuous in recommending the preservation here of the pictures and statues, principally as a lover of art, for they would infallibly be destroyed by a journey into Italy. They have many of them suffered much in being transported here, although done with the greatest care and expense which a great Empire could bestow, but I hope the question is decided.

I am sure their surrender would do more to discredit the French Government than anything in the world. The cession of the Netherlands and Antwerp is not felt as such a national disgrace as the surrender of these trophies would be.

The name of the Bourbons would be inseparably connected with this last degree of humiliation. You will think me zealous, but at present I am a little interested in their preservation, for when not engaged at a conference, my time is almost entirely spent in the Louvre. Were it not for the inexhaustible stores of Art collected here, Paris would be intolerable.

Lord Aberdeen's correspondence from Paris, where he had accompanied the armies, has not been preserved, or more probably he wrote less than when he was the principal negotiator. Lord Castlereagh was himself present, and Lord Aberdeen took a subordinate but not unimportant part in the negotiations. He was anxious to return to England, but Lord Castlereagh prevailed, and kept him in Paris till the Treaty was signed. Immediately after the signature of the Treaty Lord Aberdeen started for England, taking the Treaty with him in his carriage. He arrived in London on the 31st May, 1814. Argyll House was not ready for his reception, and, going to Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square, he learnt that a fresh misfortune had befallen the Aberdeen family in the death of Lord Hamilton, who passed away the morning of the day in which Lord Aberdeen returned after his prolonged absence on the Continent.



## CHAPTER V

### HOME AND COUNTRY (1814-1825)

“ It’s hame, and it’s hame, and it’s hame we fain would be,  
Though the cloud is in the lift, and the wind is on the lee ;  
For the sun through the mirk blinks blithe on mine ee,  
Says,—‘ I’ll shine on ye yet in your ain countrie ! ’ ”

*The Fortunes of Nigel.*

THE death of Lord Hamilton, Lord Aberdeen’s brother-in-law, was attended with consequences of the utmost importance to him. He had begun to contemplate a second marriage, desiring to have a direct heir, and also feeling the need of a mother’s care for his infant daughters.

He had fixed his hopes in a quarter where the Tory influences with which he was surrounded were not propitious to his aspirations. His chief confidante in this matter had been Lady Maria Hamilton, and during his absence he had corresponded with her and the relatives of the lady. Lady Maria had died in the spring before his return, and the difficulties in the way of this marriage were made to appear insuperable. Another influence now made itself felt. Lord Abercorn, Lord Stanmore says, brought to bear the whole force of “ his imperious nature,” and he determined to arrange a marriage between Lord Aberdeen and the widow of Lord Hamilton. Lord Abercorn’s infant grandsons were without a father, and the children of his much-beloved daughter were bereaved of a mother. Lord Aberdeen was convinced that Lady Hamilton entertained for him a strong and sincere affection, and he yielded himself to a situation which had its difficulties and perplexities. On the 15th July, 1815, Lord Aberdeen and Lady Hamilton were married at the Priory.

Of this union, their son writes : " With her he lived happily for eighteen years. Though strikingly handsome, the new Lady Aberdeen had not the dazzling beauty of her predecessor, nor was she her intellectual equal; but her devotion to her husband was unbounded, and each year as it passed saw them united in closer bonds of tranquil affection and mutual esteem. A son was born to them in 1816, and another the following year."

But it would not be in accord with true biographical portraiture to ignore or gloss over the fact that the second marriage was in some aspects a contrast to the unclouded happiness of the first.

The existence of stepchildren must surely almost always form a test, in regard to the liability of the intrusion of jealousy; and it does not appear that the second Lady Aberdeen was markedly free from this very common failing; and of course this tendency is the more likely to arise when, as in the case in point, any of the children become, owing to ill health or other causes, the object of exceptional solicitude on the part of their own parents.

It must not be inferred from what has been said that there is the slightest reason to suppose that there was any lack, on Lord Aberdeen's part, as a husband; for his letters show that, when there was occasion for expostulation, this was given with due tenderness and affection. And when the fatal disease developed which was to carry off all his three cherished children, no mother could have been more solicitous than Lady Aberdeen.

There was another hindrance, though perhaps of a subsidiary sort, which interfered with the full harmony of the union. Although, in his early years, Lord Aberdeen had spoken disparagingly of his Scottish patrimony, any feeling of that sort (and probably it was never very deep) very soon gave way to something entirely different, namely, keen appreciation and enjoyment of the place and its surroundings; in short, there was a rapid and



*From H.B.'s Political Sketches, 1842.*

**“A CABINET PUDDING.”**

Persons represented (from left to right): Lord Palmerston, Lord Melbourne, Lord Hadington, Lord Ripon, Lord Warncliffe, Lord Stanley, Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel.



*From H.B.'s Political Sketches, 1843.*

**“SOME OF THE INS AND OUTS OF THIS WORLD.”**

Persons represented (from left to right): Sir Robert Peel, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Morpeth, Lord Melbourne, Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell.





increasing development in the feeling of interest, and even affection, which usually arises from opportunities of exercising on an extensive scale the creative instinct involved in the fascinating pursuit of landscape-gardening, especially when the designer of such operations is enabled to observe and enjoy the successful fruition of his plans and efforts. Such certainly was the case with Lord Aberdeen; and the gift of discrimination, taste and prevision, displayed by him in this pursuit, resulted in a fondness for Haddo House and its surroundings that became a prominent feature in his life.

Unfortunately, the second Lady Aberdeen does not seem to have been able to enter very fully into this feature. Of course allowance must be made for the drawback which in the period referred to existed, especially for one in delicate health, with regard to the long and fatiguing journey from London to Aberdeenshire; and, moreover, although she belonged to a Scottish family, all her early associations seem to have been connected with England rather than with Scotland.

On Lord Aberdeen's return from his Embassy, and after his marriage, he was for several years chiefly occupied with the affairs of his family and estates. He had remade a home for his children and for himself; domestic happiness was what he always sought as the mainspring of all active life and endeavour. While abroad he had corresponded with Lady Jane, his eldest daughter. The letters are full of longing to return to the children of his first love, and he frequently asks them to keep him in their remembrance and not to forget their affection for him. Too soon in all three of them appeared the tragic signs of the fatal disease which was to remove them in earliest youth from the sight of his eyes and from the foreboding care with which he surrounded them. It is painful in the light of to-day to read of the wasting fevers, and the severe remedies with which they were met. In one letter instructions

are given to paste up all the windows in Argyll House so that no breath of air could enter, and all that might have countered the fatal tendency was, in the medical science of the time, rigidly forbidden. His personal watchful solicitude was ever with them. After the death of Lady Jane, at the age of eighteen, he spent three succeeding winters at Nice with Lady Alice, watching the slow but inevitable decline of the last remaining child of his first marriage. When that blow fell, it seemed as if the light of his eyes had for the second time been taken from him.

Of these children Sir Uvedale Price wrote to the poet Rogers :

I shall never forget my having seen a number of children coming out of a house in Grosvenor Square. I was so struck by their beauty that, when they had passed by me, I went up to the porter, who, with the door half open, was following them with his eyes, and asked him whose children they were. "Lord Aberdeen's," he answered, "and there is not a finer family in all Britain." Afterwards I became acquainted with Lord Aberdeen, and was continually at the Priory, and saw these beautiful and amiable children growing up in all their loveliness; but mixed with the colour of youth and beauty was that of disease, with the terrific glory of Homer's Sirius. They dropped off one after another, and of all that sportive group of cherubs that I gazed at with such delight in their infancy, not one remains.

For some years after Lord Aberdeen's return these troubles, though looming in the future, were not pressing, and he rejoiced in the society of his children and the care of his estates. His detention on the Continent had stimulated his desire to see again his home and country, and it was not long after his marriage that he found himself at Haddo.

Lord Abercorn's health began to fail, and Lord



Aberdeen's correspondence is full of efforts to cheer and alleviate his suffering. He corresponded with him on public affairs, on his trees, and on the books of that date.

During this period he was an interested spectator and at times a critic of the Government, but he took no active part till he received the seals of the Foreign Office, in the Duke of Wellington's Government, in 1828.

Lord Castlereagh had wished Lord Aberdeen to retain his Embassy, and to return to Germany as one of the plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Vienna. This he declined to do. He offered to go to Vienna for the purpose of investing the Emperor with the Order of the Garter, but not as a negotiator. Knowing that Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington were both going to be there, his own part would necessarily be a more subordinate one than he cared to undertake, more especially as his views on many points differed very materially from those of Lord Castlereagh. Their friendship remained unbroken, but it was never quite so close and cordial as it had been before 1814.

He was still treated with confidence, and consulted by Lord Castlereagh, who admitted that Lord Aberdeen had formed a more correct view than his own of the character and aims of the Russian Government. Writing in January 1816, Lord Castlereagh says :

*Jan. 31, 1816.*

I have little of news foreign or domestick. The Emperor has made himself very popular in the Venetian States, and I believe is going on well in Italy. I believe I have more than once mentioned that convulsions may be expected in Prussia, they appear to be approaching. I have heard nothing of the Russians, but the marriage of the Grand Duchess Anne is the master stroke of the Emperor's policy, the effects of which, perhaps, we shall not be long before we feel.

In the following letters Lord Aberdeen looks at the work of the Allies from an aloof standpoint, and not in agreement with much that was happening.

*Oct. 15, 1814.*

I hope you observe how our friends the Bourbons, for whom we robbed the King of Sardinia, take us to task : according to them we are as bad as Bonaparte himself, or the worst of the Revolutionary assassins. We deserve this.

*Nov. 6, 1814.*

I suppose Parliament will not go into any general business, although it is not always quite so easy to adjourn as to meet. From the Congress, except a letter from a friend, I know little. Some most infamous projects are on foot, which I fear there is little chance of baffling. What is much also to be lamented is the wise, just and moderate language which France has been enabled to assume by the atrocious policy of the Allies on some points. I believe it is probable that Castlereagh will not remain long at Vienna, but that, if necessary, Clancarty will stay for the end of the Congress. Having once known the principal actors, some of them well, it is difficult to avoid taking some interest, though mine is confined to two or three points.

Later he writes : "I live in horror of the Archdukes coming as far as Aberdeen. My hope is in the advanced state of the season." The Archdukes had probably had enough of the rigours of northern winters, and Lord Aberdeen was not invaded in his fastness.

Every year his letters deal more with his improvements within, and plantations without. The woes of "a planter" are fully detailed ; the young larches that disappoint him, cut by severe frost and horrid disease ; the oak and the ash that make astonishing growth ; acre after acre is enclosed and planted. He notes how

"in these last sad three years, I looked after nothing, and no one looked after things for me." Roebuck and grouse are continually travelling south, and Lord Abercorn receives them in fit condition. "Your Cheveril came in excellent order, and with Mr. Green's assistance was the most popular dish. Bathurst, Lutterel, Rogers, Laurence, and three or four of the ladies quite dined upon it; so that never were bones more cleanly scraped and picked."

Lord Aberdeen was always asking for literature and his note-books on what he read are full and voluminous. In 1817 he writes to Lord Abercorn :

Nov. 26, 1817.

Have you met with any tolerable new book lately? I have seen nothing of any interest except Wilson's book, which is, with all its faults, worth reading. He has ridiculously exaggerated the danger, and his jacobinical cant is detestable; but those parts of the book which people will find it most difficult to believe are nevertheless the most true. It will have more effect on the Continent than in this country.

Lord Abercorn in replying says: "Wilson's book I can't estimate as highly as you do. His assumption and dogmatisms are most disgusting." Lord Aberdeen answers: "Surely there is some new information, much as he exaggerates the power of Russia. I believe few people are aware of the military resources of that Empire. There is no doubt that the amount of troops actually on foot are more than double that of any State in Europe."

The next book on which they corresponded was one in which they were able to be more in agreement.

TO LORD ABERCORN

Jan. 18, 1818.

DEAR LORD A.,

It cannot be necessary to ask if you have finished *Rob Roy*, for he is unquestionably a fellow



not likely to be neglected when once taken in hand. On the supposition, therefore, that you have read it, "I do let loose my opinion." When we meet and your inclination suits, I shall be very desirous also of knowing what you think of it. I doubt if it will be so generally popular as either of the others; but it appears to me there are many parts quite equal to anything the author has written. In particular the scene at the Clachan, or Scotch Ale-House, the skirmish at Loch Ard, and the escape of MacGregor at the Ford of the River are all in his very best style. The Baillie is surely an excellent fellow, and the character extremely well drawn in all its parts. The general interest of the story was to me very great, and the whole narrative carries you along irresistibly.

The weak parts, as they struck me, are a clumsiness—as usual, in the *dénouement*—with a few minor inconsistencies and improbabilities.

Sir Frederick Vernon, who for years passes as a priest in the midst of a Catholic family and neighbourhood, unknown but to two or three persons, is quite an impossibility. His being represented as a bigoted Catholic himself renders it still more absurd. Perhaps the character of his daughter is rather overdone: the author may have heard that his heroines are considered too insipid, and seems determined to avoid the reproach in this instance.

It is a little inconsistent too, with the character of the Father of the hero, a stout Whig and Dissenter as he is represented, that he should consent to his son's marriage with a Jacobite and Papist. At least it is not the inflexible personage we are introduced to in the beginning of the work. The Osbaldistones are a good sketch, but only a sketch, and perhaps in parts done in rather a slovenly manner.

I confess, too, that the bloodthirsty heroicks of

Mrs. MacGregor are too stout for me, and savour somewhat of the disgusting. But with such attractions, these are slight imperfections, and would be even if they were more numerous.

I make no comparisons, nor is it necessary; for it is the great merit of this author, be he who he may, that each of his works possesses an excellence peculiar to itself, and in which it surpasses the others. It has been adduced as a proof of the beauty of the Plays of Sophocles, that each of the seven has been respectively preferred by criticks of acknowledged taste. This is eminently the case with our unknown friend; for the more I consider his works, the more difficult I find it to give any decided preference.

The interest of *Waverley*, the talents of *Guy Mannering*, the entertainment and humour of *The Antiquary*, the historick painting of *Old Mortality*, have equal claims. The best wish that I can form for your amusement, although I fear a vain one, is that you may soon meet with such another book as *Rob Roy*.

Lord Abercorn died on the date on which this letter was written. Lord Aberdeen succeeded to a large share of his personal property and became the guardian of the infant heir. From that time until 1834 the Priory was Lord Aberdeen's habitual home. His summer visits to Scotland were still made, but Stanmore was now for many years the centre of his life. Situated as it is within a few miles of London, he was able to assemble with ease at the Priory a constant succession of guests, the most distinguished in literature, art and public life, without regard to political distinction. Above all it was associated with the most important incidents of his domestic life. When in 1848 it was let by Lord Abercorn to the Queen Dowager, with a view to its ultimate sale, Lord Aberdeen wrote :

Queen Adelaide's visit seems to have been a most successful affair, but I am heartily glad I was not there. Everything in this world is so transitory that as we advance in life we must expect, of course, to see great changes. . . . It is more than forty years since I first was taught to consider the Priory as a home, and for many years I occupied it as its master. I never now go there without going to seek the dead as well as the living.

The hardships of attaining his northern home are set forth in a series of letters written to Lady Aberdeen, who did not always accompany him. The fatigues involved in such a journey, often prevented her from contemplating the expedition to what was certainly in those days "the far north," and yet increasingly his heart turned again home. Residence there was no longer a penance, and instead of escaping from its dourness, he left it with ever-increasing reluctance and regret. The people on his estates had learnt to know him as truly a Statesman in all the things that belonged to their well-being. His earliest efforts in improving the agriculture and forestry of the district were beginning to show those fruits which delight the eyes of the lover of Nature, and he was contented with the lot that had fallen to him, if not in a fair, at least in a ground which grew oats and beeves, and sent forth a race of men conquering and to conquer difficulties in all walks of life.

In 1835 he sets out to a correspondent the difference he perceives in what interests him, and in that change we recognise the influence of his home and country:

I am still President of the Society of Antiquaries of London; but I am quite aware that from my neglect of that worshipful Body, I deserve to be dismissed.

I have been sensible of this change for some time,



and it is not only the rubbish of ancient times which has ceased to interest me, but even the classical productions of antiquity have comparatively lost their charm. I do not mean that I am indifferent to the Poetry, the Oratory, or the Philosophy of Greece and Rome, or insensible to the attractions of ancient Art; but I confess they no longer occupy me as formerly.

That which never fails is the pleasure derived from the productions of Nature, and from natural scenery. Indeed this is likely to increase with years.

In this respect my lot has not been fortunate in such a country as that in which I am placed, but there are compensations; and there is no country so bad, from which much may not be extracted, and which in some points, at least, may not be compared with the best.

#### TO LADY ABERDEEN

*Eaton, Sept. 13, 1821.*

I have come here prosperously enough, as they drove fast, and the road excellent.

My journey seems terribly long, and it will be very tedious; I think if possible I shall try to shorten it a little, which may be done by not stopping to sleep at Edinburgh.

*Sept. 14.*—This has been a wretched day. The road very bad, so that I was terribly jolted in the Britchka, and did not get here before eight o'clock.

I met Clanwilliam on the road, who has been summoned by Castlereagh to go with him to Hanover. I think also that I passed Melville, or at least his carriage. This house is full, so that I am in a little back room, but they promise me a good bed, and I am too much tired to go further.

*Northallerton, Saturday, 15th.*

It is now past nine o'clock, and I am only just arrived, with a bad headache which I have had all

day. I met a great many people going to Doncaster for the races, among others Mrs. G. Fox. I met two of Harrowby's carriages and horses, these were sent to be ready for the course on Monday.

*Alnwick, Sept. 16.*

I left Northallerton about 8.30 this morning, and arrived here about nine. I believe I must give up my plan of going from this place to Haddo without stopping; for the road is so rough and the Britchka jumbles me so terribly that my headache never can get well, and I find about eighty miles quite enough for me. It is very tedious. There are a great many people travelling; I was detained some time at Morpeth for horses. I met the Duke of Bedford, but as I was reading *Madame de Staël*, which is ridiculous but rather amusing, I did not recognise him until he was past, so did not speak to him.

*Edinburgh, Sept. 17.*

I left Alnwick at seven this morning and arrived here at eight. I shall sleep to-morrow at Forfar, and get to Haddo the day after as usual. Although it was dark in coming into the town, I could see enough to perceive that the new entrance over the Calton Hill is magnificent, and the new street very handsome.

I am at what was Dumbreck's, but he has retired. It is not the house we have commonly been at, but another in the Square. As usual, it is as full as possible. I am in a small room at the top of the house, but the bedroom seems good. The bother and bustle is so great that it has hardly been possible for me to get any tea, which, as I never eat in the day except very sparingly of mutton chops, becomes an object.

*Haddo, Sept. 19.*

I have at last arrived safe, but not quite sound, being rather uncomfortable and having some sensations of cramp in the stomach. I did not leave Edinburgh till five o'clock yesterday, and by travelling all night I arrived here about six to-day.

On his return journey, writing from Edinburgh he says :

*Oct. 14.*

I arrived here last night, and crossed the [Forth] Ferry in a steamboat as the wind was quite contrary; I was a quarter of an hour, and they said that a common vessel would have been forty minutes. This is a great additional convenience, at what must always be an unpleasant part of the journey.

From Haddo he wrote minute accounts of his work on the estate. His earlier improvements began to show their effects, and the face of the country was altered in many particulars. To Lady Aberdeen he writes in 1821 :

I am a good deal tired to-night, for from eleven o'clock till eight I did not sit down an instant. I staked out with Johnston two or three considerable plantations, and I took a couple of hours' hard work thinning the plantation at the bottom of the garden. I principally cut down poplars, many of which were fifteen to eighteen inches in circumference at the root, which is an astonishing growth. I can tell you that if I live ten years more, I shall make this a really fine place.

My days pass very methodically. I get up exactly at eight; walk a quarter of an hour before breakfast at nine-thirty; write to you and do business; go out between eleven and twelve, return



at two, and after resting take a long walk from three to six. We dine at six-thirty, and go to bed eleven-thirty. Post is now well regulated. Letters come to Meldrum from London the fourth evening, and I get them before ten at night.

I rode to Formartine, and walked all over the ground on that side of the river, which is to be planted. It was really quite delightful; a bright sun shone on the wood and rocks opposite, and the leaves just beginning to change colour made it extremely beautiful. I sat for an hour on the rock, and on the very spot where our tower is to be. I built it half a dozen times, and indulged in day dreams, which to me have always been a great enjoyment. While ruminating there a couple of ravens were sailing round, and a falcon darted from the rock opposite. I could hardly tear myself away. When you are next here, if you are not strong enough to go on a pony, I must positively have you carried to the spot in a *lettica*.

And in the following year he writes of the same spot :

I went to Formartine yesterday alone. But you know I do not mind being alone, and particularly when I can indulge in delightful day dreams. I went to our tower, which I speedily built; other alterations of different kinds I performed with as little difficulty, and sitting under the rock without a human being in sight I anticipated the effects of time upon the scene. But, sweetheart, will your love bear its effects as well? for our tower owes its existence, even in the mind, to a feeling of love, and without it would be annihilated and vanish. Without it all the joys of life become flat, stale, and unprofitable.

In the autumn of 1822 Lord Aberdeen was present at the reception of George IV. in Edinburgh. His letters to Lady Aberdeen are full of curious details of the ceremonies and those who took part in them. They were not all for edification in the eyes of Lord Aberdeen, and their protracted length, which involved his long detention in Edinburgh, wearied him greatly.

The Highland Chiefs had not shed all their ancient feudal state, and there is much to remind the reader that little more than seventy years had passed since their fathers had entered Edinburgh in arms for the Pretender.

Lord Aberdeen's southern breeding and taste were amusingly outraged by the mock heroics of many of the incidents, and occasionally there is a refreshing gleam of very human irritation over the pretensions of his brother peers and country neighbours, whose experiences had not been enlarged as had been those of Lord Aberdeen by converse with foreign courts and camps.

#### TO LADY ABERDEEN

*Aug. 6, 1822. Harewood.*—I expect great difficulty in making my progress to the North, now that I am come into the usual North road, as I hear the concourse is immense. Some of the Leeds traders are gone, and going to see the show. I mean to diverge at Morpeth, and go by the road to Wooler, country I have not seen since the year 1798, when I first went to Scotland with old Melville.

*Dunbeith Hotel, Edinburgh.*

*August 10, 1822.*—I am going to-day to Melville. I dined yesterday with the President (Hope's father), who has a pretty place four miles distant. The Captain only arrived this morning by the steam vessel. Sir Charles is scuttling all over the town in order to find a bit of Sutherland Tartan for a kilt, and seems doubtful of success. I already begin to

be tired before the business begins, and as we hear that the King only sails this morning, we shall have quite enough of it.

The town, however, is really striking, for in addition to the great beauty of many of the streets, of which you can have no idea, they are full of people. Highlanders in all sorts of dresses moving about, and a look of activity and business everywhere.

The great man here is Walter Scott, who settles everything, and furnishes the precedents for all ceremonies and proceedings. I have only seen him for an instant, and he was so full of occupation even in the street, that he could scarcely speak a word.

*August 12.*—The King cannot come before to-morrow, but if he sailed when he intended, this wind ought to bring him here by that time. You cannot imagine the tumult and noise of this house, and of the whole town, in which is a compleat *bagame* throughout.

I attended a meeting of Peers to-day about the ball we intend to give, which will be a very bad but very expensive job.

The Duke of Chat, Ham, and Bran was in the Chair and speechified a good deal. The Duke of Gordon is ill and will not be able to come until after the King's arrival. Nobody has heard of Huntley, but I always imagine he will cast up at the critical moment. It will, however, be a great disappointment to him not to have his train of Highlanders ready like the other Chiefs.

Kinnoul is this instant arrived in forty-six hours from London, and brings intelligence of the King having sailed; we may therefore certainly expect him to-morrow morning.

*August 13.*—I cannot express the annoyance of



being here. In addition to other reasons, the weather has become very bad, and it has blown a gale of wind all night; so that it is quite impossible to say how long it may be before the King arrives.

It is supposed that he may land at Dunbar or Berwick, as he cannot get up the Firth.

The Highlanders increase daily. The Head of the MacGregors had posted at his door two of his followers with drawn swords—but to-day they have been removed, in consequence of a hint being given. It is not impossible that some fighting may take place before all is over, and the presence of the MacGregor may give rise to it; for some of the other clans say that they have never met this formerly outlawed race without fighting, and that they never will.

I called on Lady Gwydyr this morning, and found her with fingers pricked all over with making up bouquets of holly for her men.

Every hole in the house is full; but except Lady Gwydyr and Kinnoul I do not know them. Mr. and Lady Isabella Wemyss are in the house; but there is also a person here whom I have met on the stairs, a thousand times more beautiful than she is; I believe the Beauty I allude to is a Miss Macleod, sister of Mrs. Perceval. But, my dearest, how much rather would I see you now than all the beauties under the sun, that is to say, than all the other beauties.

*August 14.*—The King came into the Firth this morning, and arrived in Leith harbour about one o'clock. The morning was quite beautiful, and the view from the Calton Hill most magnificent, the whole place being covered with people. Just as he arrived in the harbour it began to rain hard, and

has done so ever since. I understand he was in very good humour and was willing either to land or not as he was desired. It was therefore thought better to defer the landing until to-morrow, when I hope it will be finer. I am wet through and miserable enough. Hard as the rain has been, the crowd was as great as possible all day, for you know in this country most people do not know whether it rains or not.

*August 16.*—The King made his public entry yesterday, and I am happy to say that everything went off as well as possible. From the form of the ground, and situation of the buildings, both the town and people were seen to the greatest advantage. They did not cheer quite so loud as they might have done, but I believe they were prevented more by intense curiosity and surprise than by indifference. I understand the King has expressed himself in the strongest terms of admiration at the beauty of the place, and of delight at his whole reception, which in truth he has good reason to do. He talks of staying ten days. Sir Walter told me that when he went on board the yacht to present a sort of St. Andrew's Cross to be worn in his hat, on the part of the ladies of Edinburgh, the King expressed his determination to appear in the Highland dress at his Levee. This would indeed be most preposterous, and Peel and Melville are to endeavour to change this intention. I should not forget to tell you that Sir Walter took with him also a basket of oatcake by way of welcome to the land of cakes.

We are to have the Levee to-morrow, and the Drawing-room on Tuesday. To-day he rests at Dalkeith. There will be an illumination to-night, which in such a town as this must be very beautiful.

A dreadful gloom has been thrown over everything by the intelligence of poor Castlereagh's death, and especially by the horrible manner in which it has taken place. With all his imperfections, he was a thorough gentleman, and a most efficient Minister. His loss at such a moment will be a fatal blow to the Government, and sooner or later may compromise their existence.

*August 17.*—We have had the Levee to-day, and crowded it was, as you may imagine, to the greatest degree. It took me five hours before I returned. The dresses were gay from the variety of colour, a large proportion being Highlanders. The King himself was in a Highland dress, which was absurd enough, as although it is a compliment to one part of the country, it is by no means so to the rest; and I suppose he is the first King of Scotland who ever wore it, at least since the times of actual barbarism.

The Duke of Hamilton also wore it (he has no right that I know of to do so). The Duke of Argyll, and all the Highland Chiefs were well dressed. Fife an excellent figure. Lord Francis Leveson looked very well in the Sutherland tartan, and Lord Gwydyr in the Drummond.

“Oh that this solemn mockery were o’er.” It will still last some time, and I do not well see how I am likely to escape.

Fife drives about in a chariot with two post-boys in tartan jackets; three persons riding similarly equipped; two Highlanders and a chasseur standing behind the carriage; in addition to which he has three or four Highland runners by the side of the carriage. He dines with the King every day.

*August 20.*—I shall go to Tynninghame to-day. Our proceedings are now settled for some time to



come. Sunday the King goes to the Kirk, a point which I had much at heart; after this I do not know what happens, but I believe he embarks from Hopetoun House on Wednesday.

If nothing very particular prevents me, I shall leave this vile place after church on Sunday for Haddo. I hate this place more and more; it is true just for dinner-time I may meet with pleasant people. In short I wish to be at home. Indeed you know how much I always abhorred a stay in Edinburgh.

*Tynninghame, August 21.*—We return to Edinburgh to-morrow early for the grand procession from the Palace to the Castle, which I daresay will be a fine sight. From the width of the High Street, and the enormous height of the houses, with the numerous balconies formed at the windows, covered with cloth of different colours, and with the varieties of dresses in the street itself, the whole will have a very singular and striking appearance.

*August 23.*—The procession yesterday was really superb, although it unfortunately rained almost the whole time. There were only two carriages, the King's and his attendants; all the principal personages rode, which always produces so much finer an effect. But, independantly of the ceremony, the view of the population, disposed as they were, was quite beautiful.

The Duke of Chat, Ham, and Bran looked very well carrying the crown on horseback, his horse led by two squires in magnificent dresses, and preceded by half a dozen fellows in ancient crimson costume by way of livery. He was well dressed himself.

In the evening we have the Peers' Ball—a wretched concern. I have given my opinion freely about it here. One day I held forth before Rosebery very

strongly on the subject, without knowing he was one of the first movers in the business. The truth is that the Peers have no natural union for any such purpose, which belongs more to a club, or any society of that sort. The Peers may unite to support a Throne, or upset a King, but to unite to give a Ball!!!

*August 24.*—We went before nine to the Ball, called the Peers'; it was very well done, something like a dressed Almacks. The crowd too great, and show of beauty very small. The King staid about an hour and a half, and seemed pretty well bored. I came home before one o'clock, although with some difficulty, for the confusion at the door was immense. They danced reels and country dances in the room in which the King stood. One of the best-looking persons there was Binning's cousin, Lady Glenorchy; and another was mine, Mrs. Hope Johnstone.

*August 26.*—To-day we had the grand City dinner to the King. It was really very agreeable, with the exception of having to drink so much wine, for I must have had more than a bottle of claret myself. The King talked a great deal, told many anecdotes very well, and spoke of his reception here and his whole visit in the handsomest terms. He is so consummate an actor that I do not know what he really thinks, but he certainly seemed to feel all that he said.

The King made three speeches. The worst part of it was the determination of the guests to drink everything with three times three—a practice quite disrespectful to the King, and very tiresome to the company. The King's last toast was Chieftains and Clans, and God bless the Land of Cakes. He created the Provost a Baronet by drinking to the health of

“Sir William Arbuthnot, Bt., and the magistrates of Edinburgh.”

In his first speech he mentioned the effect which his reception had made on him, and seemed to feel deeply what he said. Some time after he was gone, Melville gave, the Duke of Hamilton and the Peerage of Scotland, in a very good speech, with much personal civility to the Duke; upon which His Grace made a regular Whig speech, talking about the respect due to the *person* on the throne, and a due regard to the rights and liberties of the people, with many other Whig commonplaces. This, to be sure, considering that he was returning thanks *for us*, and not explaining his own political opinions, was in execrable taste. The speech was received in perfect silence.

I see the King adheres to his original mistake and thinks us all Highlanders. I suppose he is surprised to see that any of us wear breeches.

I wish my dinner at Dalkeith to-day was over, for I hear the King makes everyone drink a great deal of whiskey, and really my head is too bad.

On leaving these festal chieftains and their King and finding himself at Haddo, Lord Aberdeen was more than ever inclined to find in it “peace and comfort,” and he applied himself to his improvements with redoubled zeal, and to seeing as few of his neighbours, and as much of his gardener, forester and gamekeeper as he possibly could. The partridges were swarming in the reclaimed fields, now ready for an abundant harvest, and his shooting excursions further afield in search of grouse and deer are constantly chronicled. These years form a somewhat prolonged interlude; but soon again he was to be called to take his part in the affairs of the nation, and from then he was to find little release till the close of his life.



In 1825 Lord Aberdeen introduced a Bill which had far more important effects than were at the time perceived. The system of Scottish entails was remarkable for its great strictness and complexity. An entail in Scotland could not be broken save by an Act of Parliament, and almost every estate was entailed.

Under the provisions of this entail, although the life tenant of an estate might, to a certain extent, put burdens upon the property in order to effect improvements in it, he was unable to make the smallest provision for his widow or children.

This power was given by Lord Aberdeen's Act. It was accepted by the proprietors of entailed estates as a welcome relief, and few of them perceived that, this step once taken, others must follow which would be less agreeable to them.

Writing to his friend John Hope, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, Lord Aberdeen says :

It is odd that no one should see that if the tenant for life may transmit the estate to his successor heavily burdened, that successor may with justice demand that he should have the option of assuming those burdens, or of disposing of the estate to those who may with less difficulty bear them. I am not sorry that it is so, for the discovery would render the passage of my Bill less easy. I do not think I am called on myself to raise obstacles in its way, but if the objection be made I shall be prepared to meet it. I do not myself regard such consequences with any alarm. To give the possessor of an estate, who may have no personal means independent of it, the right to provide from it for his wife and children, is an act of bare justice to him and to them. It should not be denied, because its grant may sooner or later have consequences which, if not effected violently, or with too great rapidity, are perhaps not to be regretted.

The feudal system has perished, and what remains of it is destined to ultimate extinction. We still preserve some of its institutions, because they are still useful. But these too will disappear as their utility ceases, or becomes less apparent. This may or may not be matter for regret; but, provided it is not effected by means of revolution or of measures inflicting suffering and loss upon multitudes of harmless individuals, can it be regarded as an evil?

Few will deny that the changes in the position of the great, and of the people, which have steadily advanced in the last few centuries, have been attended with advantage. Is it reasonable to suppose that they have now terminated, or presumptuous to hope that, if only made when obviously called for, they will be accompanied by similar benefits?

I admit that this reasoning would not recommend my Bill to the House of Lords, and am therefore glad that the necessity for urging it has not arisen.

Personally, I am much of Gibbon's opinion, that primogeniture is an "insolent prerogative"; but I am sure that its abolition would at this moment produce mischiefs not to be counterbalanced by any corresponding advantage. It may not always be so. But I must stop, or you will think Hudson Gurney quite justified in styling me "a Jacobin! . . ."

This chapter, which deals chiefly with Lord Aberdeen's private life, may fitly be closed by an extract from his letters to his eldest son, Lord Haddo, in 1835, then an undergraduate at Cambridge. Apparently there had been some correspondence on the question of Lord Haddo joining the Pitt Club.

I do not disapprove of you not belonging to it; quite the contrary. What I disapprove of is, writing

a letter to the newspaper upon any subject, and then, writing in such terms as to lead to an erroneous interpretation of your meaning. It is much better that all the world should think you a Radical, as they do in Aberdeenshire, and where they gave your health as a toast at a recent Whig meeting. I 'who was bred at the feet of Gamaliel,' do not quite like that a son of mine should *disclaim* a Pitt Club; but I am very glad, nevertheless, that you do not belong to it.

The shifting sands of political associations and party ties were already evident; the father called in his day a Jacobin, and the son toasted as a Radical, a name in those days full of portents.

During the years between 1822 and 1828 Lord Aberdeen's friendship with the Duke of Wellington became more close and intimate, which probably had its effect in restraining the more outspoken views of the Duke.

He had refused a seat in Canning's Cabinet, but when a year later the Duke asked him to join him in forming an administration, he readily consented. Had all the Canning Cabinet retired, the Duke had destined Lord Aberdeen for the Foreign Office, but as Lord Dudley elected to remain, he offered Lord Aberdeen the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. This office enabled him to assist Lord Dudley in the Foreign Office. Lord Dudley, who was on terms of the most cordial friendship with Lord Aberdeen, welcomed his assistance, good-humouredly styling him his "coadjutor *jure successionis*." In May, 1828, Lord Dudley resigned along with Huskisson and Palmerston, and Lord Aberdeen received the Seals of the Foreign Office, and became Secretary for Foreign Affairs.



## CHAPTER VI

### RUSSIA AND TURKEY (1828-1830)

#### PART I

“The morrow of the victory has more perils than its eve.”—*Mazzini*.

LORD ABERDEEN was at the Foreign Office from 1828 to 1830. At the close of that year the Wellington Ministry was defeated in the House of Commons. These two years were full of startling events in Europe, and kept Lord Aberdeen and the Government in a state of great anxiety. War between Russia and Turkey, the Revolution in France, and the Rebellion in the Netherlands, were all included within this period; and in each, England was expected, and in the case of the Netherlands asked, to intervene.

When he became Secretary of State he found Russia and the Porte at war. The Greek insurgents were in possession of the Morea, and the Turkish troops were prohibited by the Allied Powers, carrying out the Treaty of London of 1827, from returning there. The claim of the Greeks to the Morea formed no part of the alleged grievances which had made Russia declare war; but the two questions were closely connected.

The line adopted by Lord Aberdeen with regard to these questions has been held up for disapproval from two opposite points of view, the reasons of disapprobation being inconsistent and contradictory.

In 1828-30 the popular sympathy was strongly with the Greeks, and with Russia as the enemy of the Porte and the friend of Greece. Lord Aberdeen was accused of having Turkish sympathies, and also of being desirous to cripple the resources and limit the extent of the new Greek State. Lord John Russell was delighted at each Russian success, and

Lord Palmerston asked why the Turks should be maintained at Constantinople. Twenty-five years later, on the eve of the Crimean War, popular opinion had swung round to a totally opposite point. Those who had before hailed every defeat of the Porte with joy were now its warmest allies. Lord Aberdeen was abused for not having supported Turkey against Russia in 1828, and was condemned by the public voice as having at that time betrayed her interests for the benefit of the Greeks, who were described as "her revolted subjects."

The charge that Lord Aberdeen had any sympathy with Russia is disproved by all his writings. The other fear, so often operative in our foreign policy, that of the aggression of Russia, was always present in his mind.

Lord Heytesbury was appointed as Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and Lord Aberdeen charged him with special insistence to find out the intentions of Russia. Our Ambassador soon satisfied himself that the Czar had no intention of conquest, and Lord Aberdeen, as will be seen, read these despatches "with interest but not without concern." There was no warning of an event which brought Russia and England to the verge of war. The Emperor Nicholas, who had promised to abstain from any exercise of his rights as a belligerent in the Mediterranean, suddenly, without communication with his allies, directed the blockade of the Dardanelles. On hearing this, Lord Aberdeen immediately informed Lord Heytesbury that this step would not be tolerated. The right of Russia to institute the blockade was admitted, but surprise and displeasure were strongly expressed at the use of the right, especially as the Czar had given it to be understood that the right would not be used.

The course of Lord Aberdeen's policy throughout these events is set forth in his despatches. In a despatch of June, 1828, to Lord Heytesbury, at St. Petersburg, he reminded him that the main object of the foreign policy of this country was the



preservation of peace throughout Europe. With few, and comparatively unimportant, deviations, the general tranquillity had been preserved, and the relative state of territorial possession, as established by the great Treaties of Paris and Vienna in 1814-15, had been maintained. This state of general tranquillity had been prematurely terminated by a declaration of war on the part of the Emperor of Russia against the Ottoman Porte.

Lord Aberdeen referred to the disturbed condition of the Levant, and the barbarous and sanguinary warfare by which some of the Greek provinces of the Turkish Empire had been ravaged and devastated. His Majesty's Government had trusted that by a judicious interference these hostilities might have been brought to an end. These hopes had been shattered by Russia's declaration of war. On the necessity and justice of the war His Majesty declined to express any opinion. To limit the extent and bring the contest to a speedy termination must be the main object of the Ambassador, and as far as possible to obtain the same help from the great Powers of Europe.

Looking round on the great Powers, he feared they might expect to see France moving in an uncertain and tortuous course. Acted upon by the Chambers or by a party, the Government lacked steadiness of purpose. France would probably have vague aspirations after taking a prominent part in the affairs of the East. Austria, from the threat to her own territory, and her unpreparedness, would be sincerely desirous of peace. Prussia would probably be equally desirous for the peace of Europe, but at the time no zealous or decisive co-operation on her part could be expected. If the moment arrived when the Court of Berlin had to take a definite part, it would probably be found supporting the pretensions of Russia.

Lord Heytesbury was charged to get into direct touch with the Emperor, and as Vienna was naturally



on his route, he was to find out the real views of the Austrian Cabinet with regard to the Levant. Above all he was to consider himself as the messenger of peace. Should he find territorial aggrandisement, or any intention to keep possession of the fortresses on the Bosphorus, to be part of the plan of the Czar, he was to remonstrate in the gravest tone, and report at once to his Government.

In August, Lord Aberdeen was writing to the Duke of Wellington :

If these Turks be not greater liars than the Christians are, it would certainly appear that they have no reason to be dissatisfied with their campaign. They pretend to have had an advantage in almost every affair. Sixty thousand inhabitants have been enrolled to serve in case of necessity, and it might be ninety thousand. Metternich had also written in a spirit of considerable assurance. His reason, the chances of Russian failure, but at present he was determined to watch events.

To this the Duke of Wellington replied : " I am afraid that the Turks *are* greater liars than the Christians. There is no doubt the Emperor of Russia is before Shumla; and I entertain no doubt that even with his forty thousand men he can carry their entrenched camp. It is always better to meet Metternich in front and to answer him."

Lord Heytesbury in August reported a long personal interview at Odessa with the Russian Emperor. His reception of Lord Heytesbury was more than cordial. " Why," asked the Emperor " should any doubts of me have been entertained? Did not the Notes of my Ministers and Ambassadors, my manifesto, my personal assurances, speak in sufficiently clear language? What possible views of conquest or aggrandisement could I entertain, already possessing territories much more than sufficient to gratify the largest ambition, and at the expense of an Empire

which I have to the full as great an interest in upholding as any other European Power? What neighbour could suit me so well as the Turk? What could Russia gain by the destruction of the Ottoman throne? The obstinacy of the Porte may certainly bring on complications which may lead to this result, but why should the blame of what is solely due to this obstinacy be laid on me?"

The Czar proceeded to say that the Duke of Wellington had mistaken him, but that there was one person, and that was the King, who has "invariably judged me as I deserve to be judged. I am proud of his good opinion, and wish the King to know that I am."

Lord Heytesbury hastened to assure the Czar that the British Government, in spite of their regret that war had been declared on Turkey, were yet fully convinced that the Emperor meant to fulfil all the conditions of the Treaty of July 6. The Czar was assured that the loyalty and magnanimity of his character were nowhere more justly appreciated than in England. The conversation then followed on what had been agreed to at the Treaty of London, more particularly the orders given to the admirals commanding the Allied Squadrons in the Mediterranean. In expressing a hope that we were satisfied with the sacrifice of the Russian Squadron to the sole purpose of the Trilateral Treaty, His Majesty added, "that this arrangement, though expedient for the moment, could not, in fairness, be expected to have any very long duration, should the Turks still obstinately refuse to treat with him after the fall of Varna, and the war had been carried to the Balkans. I mention this that you may not be taken by surprise. I shall then be driven to more decisive measures; and I shall want my fleet, not for the purpose which common fame would attribute to me, of bombarding or capturing Constantinople, but of doing what it was once determined the combined squadrons should jointly do, namely, blockading



the Dardanelles and starving the Turks into submission."

The Emperor pressed that England and France should also see that the stipulations of the Trilateral Treaty should not remain a dead letter, and that he would rather co-operate than act alone in the blockade of the Dardanelles.

In closing the conversation the Emperor reverted again to his own desire for the speedy termination of the war. He wished, he said, to return to the bosom of his family, and to the cares of an Empire which required all his attention. "What am I to do? The Turks make no propositions. I am ready to treat to-morrow, but not an overture is made. Can your Government assist me in any way by suggestions at Constantinople? By anything short of a mediation; that, you know, it is our principle never to admit in our negotiations with the Porte."

The Czar then asked Lord Heytesbury, not as a diplomatist, but as a man of honour, and with all frankness, to tell him what opinion he might entertain of Austria. Did Austria mean or wish to bring the Porte to reason?

Lord Heytesbury, while disclaiming power to answer for any Court except his own, thought it was Austria's interest to wish for a speedy termination of the war, and that Prince Metternich's assurances were to that effect. To this the Emperor said, "Aye, but Prince Metternich is always—" The Emperor paused.

"Is always Prince Metternich, Your Majesty would have added?"

"Exactly so. You comprehend me perfectly. Is it possible to rely on him?"

The Czar then expressed a fear that Austria encouraged the resistance of the Porte. "After the capture of the fortress of Matchin, having heard the Pacha was a man of intelligence and influence, I was determined to have an interview with him. I had him brought to my own tent. I questioned him



narrowly as to the cause of the obstinacy of the Porte. He attributed it to two causes : the personal character of the Sultan and the counsels of Austria."

The Czar sent the Pacha back to his Government with informal assurances of his willingness to treat with the Porte. The Pacha, he knew, had faithfully fulfilled his commission, but no results had come from Constantinople.

Lord Heytesbury suggested that Turkey was probably in dread of the indemnities which would be required, and that the Sultan was probably unable to make any considerable payment.

"Why not?" asked the Emperor. "The Persians submitted to a very heavy charge, and have punctually fulfilled their engagement."

"Persia, Sire, may possibly possess pecuniary resources unknown to the Turks. Were I to judge of the means of the Sultan by the appearance of those parts of his dominions which I have lately gone through, I should certainly deem him the poorest of monarchs."

"The conclusion would be as incorrect as if you were to judge of my means by the appearance of the Steppes of Siberia."

The Emperor then said there were various ways of paying, and that he might be indemnified by consignments of timber, or other articles of which he stood in need.

The Emperor reviewed the precarious state of affairs in almost every country of Europe. Lord Heytesbury reminded him how the Emperor Alexander had played the noble part of pacificator, and insinuated that the time might be near when all Europe would again turn its eyes towards the North, in the hope of finding such another pacificator on the throne of Russia.

Following the report of this interview the Ambassador said that he had become a convert to the opinion of those who maintain that the Emperor is to be securely held by his point of honour, and

that he nourishes no *arrière pensée* of conquest and aggrandisement. "I am convinced that there is nothing he more ardently desires than the arrival of propositions from the Sultan."

Lord Aberdeen replied that the report of the conversation with the Russian Emperor had been received with interest, but it was not perused without concern. The frankness and cordiality of the Emperor were highly satisfactory. Lord Aberdeen, however, noted that the Emperor had placed sentiments held by the King our Master in direct opposition to those which he attributed to some of the King's confidential servants. "In this country we know of no difference between the Sovereign and his Ministers." When the King expressed his belief in the honour and good faith of the Emperor, he was not only expressing his own opinion, but the deliberate opinion of his Council. Further, in the whole correspondence there was to be found no positive promise on any one point which might come under consideration should there be negotiations for peace between the two countries.

In June a letter had been addressed to Prince Lieven regarding the amount of indemnity to be exacted by Russia from the Porte, as well as asking for the security of future treaties. No answer had been rendered on any of these topics. "It is but an act of justice to observe, that the views entertained by the Austrian Government of the state of hostility unfortunately existing between Russia and the Porte, are entirely similar to our own; nor has the Cabinet of Vienna uttered a syllable injurious to the Emperor of Russia, or derogatory from his honour, any more than we have done ourselves."

Following on these despatches came the news in September that the Emperor of Russia had resolved to resume warlike operations, and had directed the blockade of the Dardanelles. Lord Aberdeen said the news had been heard with deep concern, and was entirely unexpected.



A strong Note to Prince Lieven was sent from the Foreign Office, pointing out that Russia had undertaken not to act in the Mediterranean apart from the Allies. The French Cabinet made no objection to the blockade, but the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen took a very different view.

On writing to Lord Heytesbury Lord Aberdeen said :

I may safely assure you that it will be quite impossible to accede to the Emperor's proposition. We have acted entirely upon the assurance given to us in the protocol. We had made the King declare to Parliament and to the whole world that which the Emperor is now determined to falsify. Even if we could be base enough to disgrace ourselves by submission, I am quite persuaded that the country would never endure it. What can we say to the sincerity and honesty of people who sport with engagements in this manner?

A despatch was sent to St. Petersburg demanding the exemption from the blockade of all British vessels, however loaded, which might have sailed under the King's declaration to Parliament. In the last extremity Lord Heytesbury was to declare that the additional naval force which had been sent to the Mediterranean had been ordered to give a general protection to the commerce of His Majesty's subjects at sea. And that protection was to be made effectual if justice could not be obtained from the Russian Government.

The Russian Government yielded to these vigorous representations, but all naval co-operation with Russia in carrying out the Treaty of London ceased. Lord Heytesbury reported from Odessa in a secret despatch that

The physical force of Russia, if ably managed, is infinitely more than sufficient to overwhelm



her opponent; but the moral force displayed by those by whom that physical force has hitherto been directed has fallen very short of what might have been expected. Indeed, I saw little either of firmness of character or of commanding talent in anybody here (except, perhaps, in the Emperor himself), and if there be no one of heavier calibre in reserve at St. Petersburg—if this little circle be Russia, the whole of Russia, as I am assured it is—the present war once over, Europe will, I think, have but little to fear from the ambition of this Colossus for some years to come. In the opinion of all those most conversant with military matters, there never was a campaign worse planned or worse conducted than this has been. If the Russians had brought their entire force at once into the field, if better arrangements had been made by the commissariat, if advantage had been taken of the opinion which existed in their favour, and of the first enthusiasm of the soldiery, if the army had really been left to the sole direction and management of one individual, even though that individual had been the Marshal Wittgenstein, they would probably at this moment have been either under the walls of Constantinople, or an advantageous peace would have terminated their labours.

The presence of a Sovereign at the head of his army can never be a matter of indifference. It is either a great evil or a great gain. If he have the talent of a Frederick or a Napoleon, the advantage of the absence of all responsibility, except towards himself, is incalculable. If he have no military talent, the disadvantage of his assuming the command is in the same proportion. But of all false positions, the falsest and most embarrassing is that of a Sovereign accompanying his army in his simple

capacity of Sovereign, disclaiming all intention of interfering, yet yielding to the pleasure of doing so at every instant; favouring some movements, censuring others, and distributing honours and rewards from his own personal observation, and without a reference to the individual to whom the command is nominally entrusted.

The presence of a Sovereign under such circumstances paralyses everything. We have a proof of this before us; where, in consequence of the Emperor's interference, everybody commands, and nobody obeys. The Emperor himself, General Diebitsch, General Benkendorff, the Grand Duke, General Kicheloff, General Woronzow,—all, in short, except the Commander-in-Chief.

So long as there was no resistance, or the army was tolerably supplied, the bad effects of such a system were comparatively but little felt; but no sooner did the difficulties begin, than disputes, accusations, recriminations, and every other evil attendant upon such a state of things began also. The army is now split into parties. The Russians lay the fault upon the Germans, and the Germans upon the Russians. All seem to be agreed in throwing the greatest share of blame upon the Emperor himself, who, independent of his too great aversion to the shedding of blood, has always allowed political considerations to outweigh the military, and by hesitation a certain success to escape him.

At the end of October Lord Aberdeen reported to the Duke the news of the fall of Varna. The Turks surrendered. "The only thing extraordinary is that after such a defence they should not have stood an assault; but perhaps their numbers did not render it possible." It was estimated the Russians lost 15,000 men before Varna, by sickness and accident

as well as the enemy. They might have stormed it with ease for four or five weeks before the surrender, for which delay the Emperor was blamed.

The Duke of Wellington believed that the Turks were willing to negotiate, not alone, but through the mediation of the Powers capable and willing to oblige Russia to perform the engagement. Metternich, the Duke thought, did not give the truth as he received it, and desired to refer the questions to a Congress.

It is clear to me (wrote the Duke) that the Turkish power in Europe will be annihilated in the next campaign if something cannot be done for their relief. They have no chance of retaking Varna. Nay, more, I am convinced that if they don't withdraw from the field altogether in the winter they will have no chance of making any resistance next spring and summer.

Metternich might be of great use if he would endeavour to prevail upon the Porte to declare explicitly what they propose to do in respect to Greece. They must see that France and England can do nothing for them till they can be satisfied respecting the future state of the Greeks.

If the Turks would open for France and England a reasonable road out of the Greek affair, and would agree to reasonable terms of peace with Russia, I should not despair of being able to prevail upon the King of France to go with us to propose these terms of peace to the Emperor of Russia, and to concur with us in preventing him from using the sea as the means of war. If His Imperial Majesty should refuse to accede to such reasonable terms of peace, and if we can prevent him from using the Black Sea, I'll engage that he will make no conquest.

In December Lord Aberdeen addressed a long despatch to Lord Cowley, the English Ambassador



at Vienna. The campaign of 1828 was reviewed in it, and it pointed out that the time was short when negotiations could be profitably carried on.

Lord Aberdeen considered that the Russian campaign had failed in its main object, as compared to the expectations with which it was undertaken, and this in spite of the capture for the first time of the fortress of Varna. The Russian army had lost in stores and men, above all in the temporary destruction of that character of invincibility which had perhaps been too easily granted to the arms of His Imperial Majesty. In spite of this their losses had not been overwhelming, no general action had been fought, and there had been nothing like signal defeat.

A deficiency of water in some districts and the extraordinary severity of the winter were among the unlooked-for accidents of the campaign. Notwithstanding all this, it would be a great mistake not to reckon on the Emperor Nicholas taking the field again in the spring with a force superior to that with which he commenced the late campaign. The Sultan Mahmoud would have to consider what he had to oppose to Russia. In himself an energy of character and a firmness of purpose well suited to a situation of danger, and a people animated by religious enthusiasm, and capable of great sacrifices in resisting what is universally felt as an unjust aggression. Turkey possessed no financial resources, its troops at the best were an undisciplined and tumultuary rabble; and the whole system of Government, if system it could be called, was ruinous and anarchical.

Prince Metternich was to be invited to contrast the Ottoman with any other European State. In ordinary cases, after bloody and extensive wars and conquests, peace heals all wounds. Governments might change, dynasties be overthrown, without society and the exercise of lawful authority being materially affected. Once destroy the Turkish power,

it would be impossible to reconstruct it. Every province would be in a state of tumult and revolt not only against the Sultan, but against Turkish authority. War of that nature would have features of untold horror, and such a condition would be heralded by a period of confusion and bloodshed.

His Majesty's Government had felt and expressed an interest in the independence of the Turkish Empire. This interest was not only founded upon a conviction of the necessity of maintaining the general basis of territorial possession in Europe as established at the Congress of Vienna, but it was also due to a Power with which, during its existence in Europe for nearly four centuries, this country had contracted many engagements of commerce, friendship and alliance, and which had shown itself worthy of contracting such engagements with us, by the honour and good faith with which they had been observed.

The despatch pointed out that while it might be an act of duty and inclination to uphold the independence of the Turkish power as it existed in Europe; in the event of its being overthrown, would any Power impose burdens and sacrifices on its people in order to bring the Turk back into Christendom?

The Sultan, it was urged, would be more likely to enter into negotiations for peace if Austria co-operated heartily to that effect. The Reis Effendi, in a conversation with the Imperial Internuncio, appears to have testified the willingness of the Sultan to treat for and to conclude a peace, under the mediation or guarantee of the Great Powers of Europe. This indicated an extraordinary change in the counsels of the Porte, so compassed with ancient maxims of Turkish policy. It was clear that until the stipulations of the Treaty of London were fulfilled, Great Britain and France could never interfere, with due effect, either for the preservation of a general peace, or for the preservation of the Sultan's throne. These Powers having contracted an engagement to



which they had scrupulously adhered, notwithstanding the unexpected divergence of Russia, and even at the risk of a state of hostility, these bonds must be adhered to.

Admitted that the Court of Vienna had never viewed with approbation the principles on which the Greek Treaty was formed, it was not now the time to question the wisdom of the compact. It might be admitted that error and injustice had their place in the Treaty. If it was an evil, it was an evil of which the existence was firmly established, and which must be dealt with accordingly.

Metternich was also reminded that whatever complications and difficulties might be or, it was hinted, be engineered by any of the Powers, that would not make the British Government alter in any degree their relations to the Treaty. "Much as His Majesty desires the independence and stability of the Turkish power, the preservation of his own honour is still more dear to him."

The great object of the Austrian Cabinet should therefore be to use all the influence it possessed with the Porte to get it to obtain some reasonable settlement of the affairs of Greece, consonant with the terms of the Treaty of London. The Allies had provisionally guaranteed the possession of the Morea and the neighbouring islands to Greece. No final decision had been reached, but in all probability that would be sufficient to comply with the conditions of the Treaty.

If Austria used her influence on the Porte in support of this arrangement, in conjunction with France and England, the effect would be instantaneous, and probably effectual; far more so than any attempt to negotiate direct with Russia.

Prince Metternich, in reply to this overture, denied the accuracy of the assumptions on which it was based. He professed to believe that the campaign of 1829 would not be more successful than that of 1828, and that the Turks were able to hold their



own without support or assistance. In the course of the following spring another attempt was made to induce him to prevail on the Turks to assent to the establishment of a Greek State, and thus clear the way for effective interposition on their behalf; but he replied that Austria was in a very embarrassing position, and that he believed the safest course for her to pursue would be to abstain altogether from interfering upon the present occasion.

It is therefore an error, though one very generally entertained, to suppose that Prince Metternich desired to undertake an armed intervention on behalf of Turkey. The attitude he really occupied is thus pithily and accurately described by the Duke of Wellington in a letter to Lord Aberdeen :

Metternich is garrulous—he is not very fond of the Russians, but very much so of talking and writing upon the extent and consequence of their losses, which, as usual in persons of that disposition, he exaggerates; and boasts, probably with some truth, that if the consequences could be prevented, it is in the power of his master totally to destroy their combination for the next campaign. But he no more thinks of interfering by arms than he does of attacking France; and he would act more wisely if he kept himself quiet altogether and was silent. I'll engage for it that the Emperor of Russia is more afraid of us, who are as quiet as mice, than he is of the Austrians, though the Austrians have more in their power immediately.

The way for France and us to keep well together, which is an object so desirable to both countries, is for each to examine well the bearings of every question upon the interests and honour of each, before we enter too far with them.

Nevertheless, during the Spring another attempt was made to induce Austria to take the part Lord

Aberdeen had pointed out in his despatch to Prince Metternich.

In the beginning of 1829 Lord Heytesbury wrote from St. Petersburg: "We do too much honour to the Government of this country if we suppose it is guided by any profound system of policy. There is no system at all and that the Government acts by fits and starts, varying in projects from day to day, and guided only by chance or circumstances." Russia, he wrote, has undoubtedly fallen from the high station she had usurped in the opinion of the world, and it is well and just that she should so have fallen; but her humiliation will not render her more tractable, and therefore it were not politic to make her feel it too strongly.

Reporting on the theatre of the war, he believed that after great efforts the Russians would only bring 150,000 effective soldiers into the field, for the Polish army was not to move.

The campaign proceeded, and Lord Aberdeen's predictions were fully verified. The Russians obtained success after success. In July the Duke of Wellington wrote:

The Russian demands will be raised, and I can't say that the Porte has any means of resistance. We are certainly interested in preventing the extension of the Russian power in Asia, and particularly in preventing their having possession of Poti and Anapa. They feel that this is the case, and therefore keep secret from us this intended departure, on their part, from the letter and spirit of their engagement to the world when they commenced the war.

I quite agree with Lord Heytesbury respecting the nature of their power. But observe that they are harmless only when single-handed. If united with France, or either of the great German Powers, they are very formidable; and having the desire not only as a nation, but as individuals, to mix

themselves up as principals in every concern, and having a real interest in none, I am not quite certain that they are not the most inconvenient for us to deal with on friendly terms of any Power of Europe.

Lord Aberdeen replied :

It strikes me that Lieven and Madame de Lieven both look to the arrival of the Russians at Constantinople as a probable event. They talked of the necessity of confidence; and when I asked if they expected us to confide while Constantinople was burning, they both said that it was precisely the time when it was most required and would do most good.

A crisis (Lord Aberdeen wrote in August), has now arrived. The defeat of the army of the Grand Vizier and the capture of the principal fortresses have opened a road to the capital. The Russian Cabinet must be sensible that the approach of the Russian forces to Constantinople cannot be regarded with indifference by this country, or by any of those Powers who are interested in the preservation of European tranquillity and the independent existence of the Turkish Empire.

Lord Heytesbury was, if possible, to extract a frank exposition of the views of the Russian Government on the situation. In despatch after despatch Lord Aberdeen said he longed very much to put to the proof the sincerity of the Emperor's pacific declarations.

In writing to the Duke, Aberdeen says :

I could not help telling Lieven that if General Diebitsch arrived at Constantinople, we should not feel much better satisfied even if he made a fresh protestation.



In August Lord Cowley reported from Vienna that the Russians had captured Erzeroum, but that their advance towards the capital had not altered the Sultan's determination to resist to the last extremity rather than subscribe to the conditions insisted upon by Russia. Lord Cowley had seen the terms presented to the Turks:

(1) The entire fulfilment of the Treaty of Ackermann.

(2) Indemnity for the losses and damages which the Russian commerce had sustained in consequence of the war, and compensation for the expenses of the war.

(3) The free passage of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus for vessels of all nations without being visited.

(4) The arrangement of the affairs of Greece.

The Turks had at once rejected these terms. Not even were the Russians to obtain possession of every fortress in the Empire, and to succeed in passing the Balkans and in laying siege to Constantinople, would they be accepted. Further, a council held in Constantinople had determined to construct additional works for the defence of the capital.

A change having taken place in the French Government, Lord Aberdeen thought it worth while to invite its co-operation. He wrote to Lord Stuart de Rothesay, desiring him to lose no time in communicating with the Prince de Polignac upon the present state of the war in the East of Europe.

The magnitude of the crisis was such that even in the unsettled state of French affairs it was necessary that the Governments of France and England should do all in their power to prevent a protracted war being carried on.

The arguments contained in the despatch were much the same as those Lord Aberdeen had pressed on Austria the preceding year.

The French Government declined to assist in any measures to prevent the apparently approaching

catastrophe, and Prince Polignac saw no reason to distrust the assurances of moderation given by the Russian Emperor.

Russia, while gaining successes in the campaign, was still professing a great desire for peace. Lord Aberdeen, writing to the Duke, says :

I saw Mr. Temple, just arrived from St. Petersburg. He says the Emperor makes no secret of the difficulties of his situation at home. There is a great deal of discontent, perhaps without any definite object, but likely to lead to mischief. The proprietors are becoming rapidly more distressed, especially among the owners of land poverty is increasing. The war has been almost universally unpopular, although the recent successes had begun to change these feelings. Mr. Temple says that it is impossible to form a notion of the degree to which the hatred of foreigners employed in the army is carried among the true Russians. He is convinced that the complete failure of the campaign would have been comparatively little felt, in consequence of the number of foreigners possessing command. All these reasons persuade him that the Emperor is desirous of turning his attention to domestic affairs.

This is all very well; but even if inclined, it may now be very difficult for him to stop. The conquest of Constantinople, realising the dreams of a century, may well restore popularity to his measures at home, if he can make up his mind to risk the effect which it may produce upon other Powers. It does not appear likely that he has much to apprehend from French displeasure.

In August Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Duke :

The Turks are at last really alarmed; and if it be true that the Reis Effendi was about to be dismissed,

if peace can be obtained by submission it will be made by his successor. Whether it can be had on any terms may be doubtful. The last intelligence left the Russians within eight or ten easy marches of Constantinople. A new epoch is about to arrive, when the whole question will assume another character.

To Lord Heytesbury he wrote privately :

The truth is, that England and Austria are the only Powers who really have at heart the tranquillity of Europe. France and Russia are essentially unquiet, meddling and encroaching. Austria and England, therefore, are naturally united in this object, which, above all others, is the most important. We have nothing to do with or to care about bigotry or ignorance or despotism, the one thing needful is peace. The best friend of England must necessarily be that Power from whose designs the peace of Europe has least to fear.

It was evident to Lord Aberdeen that England would be left single-handed to help the Turks if they were to be given any help. It mattered more to the other Powers if Constantinople was taken by the Russians, and even if its occupation were of a temporary nature, it would have led to open collisions.

The English Ambassador at Constantinople was Sir Robert Gordon, a warm friend of the Turks, and strongly animated by anti-Russian and anti-Greek prejudices. When the Russians arrived at Adrianople he ordered the fleet under Sir P. Malcolm to Tenedos, with instructions to be ready to pass the Dardanelles at a moment's notice. Had the Russians advanced beyond Adrianople the fleet was immediately to enter the Sea of Marmora for the purpose of defending the Bosphorus.

But both armies were reduced to a state of demoralisation. The Russians were enfeebled by disease and by internal dissensions. The Turkish



army, according to Sir Robert Gordon's account, were in an even worse plight.

Nothing (he wrote) but an immediate cessation of hostilities can possibly save this Empire from total destruction. The internal disorder is even more alarming than the danger with which it is threatened from without: disaffection and insubordination have reached the highest pitch. There no longer exists an embodied Turkish army; and the few scattered troops which the Russians have fallen in with decline to offer any resistance. . . . It is certain, so broken-hearted are the Turks, that if the Russians appeared with 10,000 men upon the heights above the capital, they might enter the next day, as at Adrianople, by capitulation; in ten days more they might be masters on both sides the Hellespont from Tenedos to the Black Sea.

However this might be, the Treaty of Adrianople was signed on September 14. When the conditions of the peace were known, the Emperor of Austria and the King of France wrote to congratulate the Emperor Nicholas on the success which had attended his arms, and the moderation he had displayed. The King of England did not write a similar letter; on the contrary, Lord Aberdeen addressed a despatch to Lord Heytesbury, containing very severe criticism upon the terms of the Treaty.

Prince Metternich did not approve the Treaty, but continued to urge the absolute necessity of close union between Russia and Austria, as a counterpoise to the revolutionary tendencies of France. He thought that had Great Britain taken a more decided line, many of the misfortunes which had fallen on the Turkish Empire might have been averted.

Lord Aberdeen replied to this:

At what moment would Prince Metternich have recommended the adoption of a more decided tone?

When the Emperor Nicholas declared war against the Porte, he exercised the right belonging to every independent Sovereign, of obtaining redress for injuries alleged to have been committed against his own honour and the interests of his subjects. All the Great Powers of the Continent, not excepting Austria, recognised the justice of these hostilities. It was otherwise with His Majesty's Government. Great Britain objected to the beginning of the war, and she refused to acknowledge the blockade of the Dardanelles.

Prince Metternich cannot surely mean that we might acquiesce in the declaration of War by the Emperor Nicholas, and yet feel ourselves at liberty to quarrel with him for carrying it on with vigour and success, in a word, that we should expect Russia to make war with reference principally to our convenience rather than in conformity with her own policy and the promotion of her own interests.

The despatch went on to say that, Great Britain having no separate objects to attain, and having nothing to fear, it had been peculiarly her office to watch over the peaceful relations of States, and by upholding the established balance to promote the security and prosperity of each. "From this office we shall not shrink. However prompt to act when called upon exclusively by a regard for the honour and dignity of Great Britain, Prince Metternich will probably admit that when the interest is European it is reasonable that we should look for European concert and support."

The motive behind Lord Aberdeen's action was not love of the Turks, but he suspected the designs of Russia. His view of the Greek cause was under the same fear. A few years before he had regarded it with more favour, but the Greek insurrection at this time was mainly directed from Russia, and he

felt that to enlarge and strengthen Greece was apparently to give Russia control over the southern provinces of European Turkey.

These views he put forth in the House of Lords in answer to Lord Holland. He regretted the weakness of Turkey. "Not from any love of the Turks or of the Turkish Government. God forbid! I have seen and known the effect of the barbarous rule existing there, and nobody can be more alive to the horrors with which it abounds. But, give me leave to say that the improvement of even Turkey may be purchased at too dear a rate, and I still think that the conquest of that country by Russia would be paying dear indeed for the amelioration of its condition."

The Treaty of Adrianople made Lord Aberdeen abandon the hope he had entertained of finding in Turkey any effectual resistance to the progress of Russia. Writing to his brother, Sir Robert Gordon, he says :

The events of the war have clearly shown to the most incredulous, not only that the Porte was utterly unable to contend with any prospect of success against the arms of Russia, but that, trusting to its own resources and without foreign aid, the existence of the Turkish Empire may be said at this moment to depend upon the absolute will and pleasure of the Emperor Nicholas.

We may perhaps be tempted to suspect that the blow long since predicted is about to arrive, and that independently of all foreign or hostile impulse, this clumsy fabric of barbarous power will speedily crumble to pieces from its own inherent causes of decay.

Whenever this feeble and precarious dominion shall cease, we ought not to occupy ourselves in vain efforts to restore its existence. Our object



ought rather to be to find the means of supplying its place in a manner the most beneficial in the interests of civilisation and peace.

Lord Aberdeen therefore proposed that Greece should be an independent State, free altogether from the suzerainty of the Porte, and that its frontiers should receive a considerable extension beyond those contemplated by the protocols of March, 1829.

He wrote again to his brother, a private letter :

You know that to preserve the Porte substantially entire was my great wish. The instant that the Russians had arrived at Adrianople and we saw of what the Turkish Empire was composed, I changed my views, and determined to lay the foundation, if possible, of making something out of Greece. . . . I now look to establish a solid power in Greece with which we may form a natural connection, and which, if necessary, we may cordially support in future.

But Lord Aberdeen found little support among his colleagues, except from Sir Robert Peel, and to some extent from Mr. Goulburn. The Duke himself clung to his Turkish sympathies, and Lord Bathurst Lord Ellenborough, and others were still more firmly wedded to their original predilections.

In October, 1829, the Duke wrote to Lord Aberdeen :

It would be absurd to think of bolstering up the Turkish Power in Europe. It is gone, in fact; and the tranquillity of the world, or what is the same thing, the confidence of the world in the permanence of tranquillity, along with it. I am not quite certain that what will exist will not be worse than the immediate annihilation of the Turkish power.

It does not appear to me to be possible to make out of the Greek affair any substitute for the Turkish power, or anything of which use could be made



ARGYLL HOUSE.

Lord Aberdeen's residence in London.

From a coloured print at the British Museum.





hereafter, in case of its entire annihilation and extinction. All I wish is, to get out of the Greek affair without loss of honour, and without imminent risk for the safety of the Ionian Islands.

After much discussion, the independent sovereignty was conceded to Lord Aberdeen; but he could not gain the assent of the Cabinet to any extension of the limits of Greece beyond those already determined. With his accustomed loyalty to his chief and to his colleagues, he strove, in all his correspondence, to make the best of an arrangement he did not really like. To his brother alone he permitted himself to express the whole extent of his views with regard to the future which lay before the new State. In his judgment, however, the exact limits of the Greek kingdom had now become of far less importance than the choice of an efficient sovereign for it. He thought it essential that he should be a man of real capacity, willing to work and competent to rule; one on whom would naturally devolve—or who, in case of need, might seize—the inheritance of the Sultan.

Among the numerous princes who were either candidates for the new sovereignty, or had been urged to become so, there were two—Prince Frederick of Orange and Prince Philip of Hesse—who appeared to Lord Aberdeen to combine the qualities required for the post. Both were men of ability, decision, and strength of character. But of these, Prince Frederick declined to allow himself to be nominated, and the French Court refused to permit the appointment of a prince who was also a general in the Austrian army, which was the position of Prince Philip. Of him the Duke wrote: "I know him, and believe him to be as little friendly to this country as any other Prince on the Continent."

Prince John of Saxony was the candidate put forward by France, while Prussia urged the claims of Prince Charles of Mecklenburg. Two Archdukes, Maximilian and Bernard of Tuscany, were supposed to

be willing to undertake the task. In Lord Aberdeen's opinion they were more fit to criticise Greek architecture and collect Greek coins than to rule a turbulent and hungry crowd of modern Greeks.

Two other princes had proposed themselves as candidates, Prince Paul of Württemberg and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. Prince Leopold was accepted, to his own great satisfaction, by the Conference, rather on the principle that no Power could offer a definite objection to him.

Lord Aberdeen wrote to his brother at Constantinople:

I hope you have been preparing our friends for the independence of Greece. This is what we shall certainly establish. We have reduced the limits as much as we have been able; but in this respect we have been obliged to give way more than we could have wished. I consider the appointment of Leopold an invaluable security for the Porte.

I think you are allowing yourself to be deceived respecting the state of that Empire. It is not wonderful that you should feel a kindness for people who treat you with such favour and distinction, and I am among the first to admit that the poor devils have endured great injustice. For their great misfortunes they have themselves only to thank; their obstinacy and infatuation have brought them to their present state, and have deprived us of the means of being really useful to them. It is impossible that you can be right respecting the possibility of their recovering their former position in Europe. Every province is in revolt, and the moral effect of a peace dictated at Adrianople cannot be recovered by any means at the disposal of the Sultan.

Sir Robert said Lord Aberdeen's despatch had made him perfectly unhappy, because he regarded it



as tantamount to a death-warrant of Sultan Mahmoud's power, which he had been labouring to defend and foster. He believed that the Treaty of Adrianople, with all its burdens, would be more palatable to the Porte than the certain knowledge that the preservation of the Turkish Empire was no longer an object of the British care.

Lord Aberdeen wrote in reply to remove some of the apprehensions he had raised by his despatch. He said that His Majesty's Government had formed decided opinions concerning the Turkish Empire. After having seen a victorious enemy within a single march of the Capital, apathy and disaffection prevailing in every province, a general disorganisation, and even attempted reforms made without method and discretion, it was difficult to place much confidence in the stability of a Power in such a condition. At the same time he told Sir Robert he was entirely mistaken in supposing that the Government was indifferent to the preservation of the Porte, or that they contemplated its downfall with complacency.

Greece, he said, could not be left as it was before the peace of Adrianople. The increased dangers to the Turkish Empire, and its uncertain duration, made the complicated relations at one time contemplated with the Greek State impossible. "We are satisfied that the independence of Greece, with a restricted frontier, will ultimately prove more advantageous to the Porte."

The shrewdness and diplomatic talents of the future King of the Belgians, Prince Leopold, were not then suspected. He was thought to be indolent and undecided, and that the Russian Minister who then presided over the Greek State would be able to guide his ways.

Capo d'Istrias had no wish to part with his own authority, and when he became aware that the Prince was a man of considerable capacity, he was as anxious to get rid of him as he had been to name him. By playing on the indolence and self-indulgence



of Prince Leopold's character he knew how to frighten him into abdicating the dignity he had accepted.

It was a misfortune. Had he, or either Prince Frederick of Orange or Prince Philip, assumed the reins of government, Greece would probably have played the part which Lord Aberdeen intended her to play, and which was much the same as that which Bulgaria has played in our own times. No successor to Prince Leopold had been selected before Lord Aberdeen left the Foreign Office. By Lord Palmerston it was determined that the sovereign of Greece should not be its ruler, but a constitutional king of the approved type, a figure-head, not a governor; and that, even during the time which must elapse before a Constitution could be framed, he should rule through a council. Accordingly, the young Otho of Bavaria was chosen, and a council of regency, mainly composed of Germans, set up to rule in his name. It was an unfortunate choice. What Greece wanted was the direction of a single vigorous mind, the grasp of one firm hand. What it got was a divided council of timid and selfish pedants, acting in the name of a dull, incompetent boy.

## CHAPTER VI

### PART II

#### FRANCE (1830)

“ A time there is for change and chance,  
A time for passing of the cup;  
And One abides can yet bind up  
Broken France.

A time there is for change and chance.  
Who next shall drink the trembling cup,  
Wring out its dregs and suck them up,  
After France? ”

*C. Rossetti.*

THE dispute in Portugal concerning the successor to the Crowns of Portugal and Brazil came before the Foreign Office. Lord Aberdeen was of the opinion that neither the interests of Great Britain nor of Portugal would be benefited by interference.

Dom Pedro, on his accession in 1826, chose Brazil and resigned Portugal to his infant daughter. He at the same time granted a Constitution to Portugal which wholly set aside the existing Cortes.

The question was one of imposing the young Queen and the Constitution by means of British bayonets. To this Lord Aberdeen decidedly objected. His argument to M. Barbecue is only interesting as it shows how much interference there had been with the affairs of neighbouring States.

It is then either for the purpose of resisting successful rebellion, or for that of deciding by force a question of doubtful succession, that Great Britain has now been called upon to act. But it is impossible to imagine that any independent State could ever intend thus to commit the direction and control of

its internal affairs to the hands of another Power; for doubtless, if His Majesty be under the necessity of furnishing effectual succour in the event of any internal revolt or dissension in Portugal, it would become a duty, and indeed it would be essential, to take care that no such cause should exist if it could possibly be prevented. Hence a constant and minute interference in the affairs of Portugal would be indispensable, for His Majesty could never consent to hold his fleets and armies at the disposal of a King of Portugal without any of those due precautions, and that superintendence, which would assure him that his forces would not be liable to be employed in averting the effects of misgovernment, folly or caprice. Is this a condition of things in which any State professing to be independent could endure to exist?

These demands on the part of the young Queen were echoed in the House of Lords by Lord Holland, to whom Lord Aberdeen pointed out that the obligation incumbent on Great Britain to defend the House of Braganza from foreign invasion did not extend to the case of internal dissensions. "It would be quite impossible to fulfil such engagements, if they had ever been entered into, which they had not. There would be no end to interference, if we were liable to be called on in every case of dispute between the members of that family or between the King and his people."

This is a doctrine more obvious to-day than to the Whig opposition of 1830. We may be content with knowing that apart from the age of the Treaty, British bayonets were not employed against Portugal, "our ancient ally." Indeed other matters were engrossing the attention of the Foreign Office. France was on the eve of her Revolution of 1830, and was in various ways endeavouring to distract attention by foreign enterprise. A few weeks after the French



Revolution which set Louis Philippe on the throne of France and drove Charles X as an exile to the Palace of Holyrood, Belgium was in revolt, and this was speedily converted into a revolution.

Questions more difficult of solution than those involved in the French Revolution were thus raised. Whatever might be said as to the inapplicability of the protocol of Aix-la-Chapelle to the existing state of things in France, it was impossible to deny that the obvious *primâ facie* interpretation of existing engagements under the Treaties of 1814 and 1815 bound England and her allies to maintain the integrity of the kingdom of the Netherlands, and to comply with the King's request for their armed intervention between himself and his revolted subjects. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen were resolved not to adopt a course which would have rendered war with France all but inevitable, and were most anxious to engage the French Government in negotiations which would, at all events, prevent any open assistance being afforded to the Belgian insurgents from that quarter.

In the pursuit of these objects they were most efficaciously aided by Talleyrand, who had been sent to London as French Ambassador by Louis Philippe; and it is not impossible, nor indeed improbable, that with his assistance means might have been found to maintain the link which bound together the Provinces of the Netherlands, while giving effect to the just complaints of Belgium.

In one paragraph of the draft of a despatch Lord Aberdeen had remarked, with satisfaction, that in the change which had been effected "the horrible excesses which disgraced the former revolution have happily been avoided." The Duke of Wellington pencilled on the margin, "We must not travel too fast. Observe that only one month has elapsed since the issue of the Ordinances; compare that with the first month of 1789."

The paragraph was altered to the expression of a

hope that such excesses might be avoided. The discussion held with Prince Polignac daily assumed a more threatening aspect, and but for the revolution in France might have brought about a war between that country and England. It was held at the time that the Wellington Government and Lord Aberdeen entertained strong sympathies with the reactionary Government in France. It was thought that, if they did not advise, they at least regarded without displeasure its attempt to recover autocratic power.

This was a mistaken view. The correspondence of Lord Aberdeen shows how clearly he saw the folly, and how decidedly he disapproved the violence of the French Government. His public as well as his private letters prove that the Government of Charles was regarded by him from first to last with suspicion, distrust and dislike.

In the latter part of 1829 rumours reached the English Government that France contemplated an expedition against Algiers, and had entered into engagements with Mehemet Ali Pacha of Egypt to assist in the operation, the Pacha receiving as his reward the Regencies of Tunis and Tripoli. The truth of these rumours was persistently denied.

In the early days of January 1830 Lord Aberdeen received from Prince Metternich, through Lord Cowley, copies of the despatches of the French Ambassador at Constantinople to his Government, which the Prince had found means to intercept. These despatches afforded incontrovertible evidence, not only that the French Government contemplated an expedition against Algiers, but also of the alliance with Mehemet Ali.

The English Ambassador at the Porte was directed to interpose to procure reasonable satisfaction for France, and a warning was dispatched to Mehemet Ali, which effectually stopped his co-operation.

Lord Stuart de Rothesay was also instructed to suggest to Prince Polignac "the sincere desire of



His Majesty that the King of France should obtain from the Regency of Algiers the most ample reparation which the provocation and insults he has endured entitle him to demand from that State; but you will at the same time avow a hope that it may still be possible to obtain this reparation without carrying into execution the measures of entire destruction which have been threatened.

Should this termination of the affair prove to be impracticable, and if the French Government should persevere in the resolution utterly to destroy the Regency of Algiers, you will suggest to M. de Polignac the propriety of affording some explanation of their ulterior views, and of satisfying those who cannot but witness with some anxiety the consequences of an undertaking of this description. M. de Polignac will probably think it right to give the necessary assurances that his most Christian Majesty has no intention of establishing a French garrison on the coast, or of finally settling this State with a view to the exclusive prevalence of French interests.

On the 25th Lord Stuart saw Prince Polignac, who told him that the expedition was resolved on, and would enforce the demolition of the fortifications of Algiers and the abolition of piracy and slavery. He denied the intention on the part of the French Government to form any colony, or place French garrisons on any part of the African coast, saying that, whenever the object of the expedition was obtained, either by the submission of the Dey<sup>1</sup> or the establishment of a new national government dependent on the Porte, the expedition, which was to be of 40,000 men, would return to France.

Lord Aberdeen drew attention to the alarm felt by the Maritime Powers at such a force being sent,

<sup>1</sup> Husein III, Dey of Algiers, 1818-1830.



and, as M. de Polignac had only verbally stated the above, it was of course necessary that this pledge should be recorded more formally. "The formidable force about to be embarked appears to indicate an intention of effecting the entire destruction of the Regency, rather than an infliction of chastisement. This probable change in the condition of a territory so important from its geographical position cannot be regarded without much interest, and it renders some explanation of the intentions of the French Government still more desirable. The intimate union and concert existing between the two countries give us reason to expect to receive the full confidence of the French Government in a matter touching the interests of both, and which in its results may be productive of the most important effects upon the commercial and political relations of the Mediterranean station."

On the 15th Lord Stuart wrote that he had seen M. de Polignac, who had informed him that explanations would be given through the Duke of Laval, that the despatch would contain a full recapitulation of events which had provoked the expedition, and that it would conclude with the assurance that the King of France would concur with all or any of his allies in determining the future government of the country which had been the scene of military operations. No renunciation on the part of France to obtain territory on the coast of Africa appeared in the despatch when, after long delay, it was communicated to Lord Aberdeen.

The Duke here interposed a memorandum :

It will be necessary for Lord Aberdeen to consider what the Cabinet ought to do upon this case.

We have demanded an official explanation, we have received a verbal one; which upon one point is so far unsatisfactory as that it states the intention of the French Government to alter the nature of the tenure of its possessions on the coast of Africa from

being, as heretofore, a commercial factory, to hereafter a fortified post.

We have stated in Parliament that the French Government had manifested a disposition to give every explanation we had a right to require. They now decline to give that explanation in the only form in which it can be used in Parliament or elsewhere.

I don't think that we can go to war because we have a verbal explanation instead of one in writing, but I think that we ought to desire Lord Stuart to present a Note to Prince Polignac, expressing the disappointment of this Government upon finding that, notwithstanding His Highness's repeated assurances, the French Ambassador in London had not been authorised to give more than verbal explanations.

The Memorandum concluded that Lord Stuart might be ordered to convey to the French Government the knowledge that although we admit the justice of their cause, His Majesty will look with anxiety on the termination of those operations, as the interests of his people and the honour of his crown require that there should be no alteration in the state of possession on the coast of Africa, to the detriment of the Ottoman Porte, and in favour of His Most Christian Majesty.

On May 4 Lord Aberdeen again wrote :

The affair begins to wear a sinister appearance, and to give rise to doubts and suspicions, which it would be very far from the desire of His Majesty's Government to entertain. We have a duty to perform from which we cannot shrink. It is clearly our duty to require an official explanation of the ultimate designs of the French Government in equipping and fitting out a military expedition of unexampled magnitude, and thereby calculated to

excite speculation and apprehension throughout the south of Europe.

But the rotund processes of diplomacy were too slow to overtake the French action. They were now fully equipped and had their prey in view. Lord Aberdeen heard with astonishment and concern that the French Government thought the expectations of His Majesty's Government were unreasonable, and declined to give any further explanation or assurances in any official form.

Lord Aberdeen on his part made one more appeal to the consistency and good faith of M. de Polignac. "It will be my duty humbly to take His Majesty's commands respecting such further instruction to your Excellency as the occasion may seem to require. The affair of the explanation respecting Algiers has become very serious."

Lord Stuart, bombarded with despatches, replies that "Your Lordship has sufficient experience of the mode of proceeding of this Government to admit that I cannot fairly be rendered responsible for the falsehood of the assurances I receive, or the failure of M. de Polignac's promises. My representations upon this subject, both direct or indirect, have been unceasing, and have on more than one occasion been accompanied by indications of the hostile consequences which must result from the formation of French establishments on the coasts of Africa that have been contained in your Lordship's instructions."

Another despatch was forwarded, where the word "official" was underlined, and the gravest consequences were pointed out.

Austria now takes up the word, and Lord Cowley, our Ambassador at that Court, writes of certain despatches received there. The new elections were on in France and M. de Polignac speaks with confidence of their result. He expects a considerable majority. The Austrian Ambassador considers that the Algerine expedition has been undertaken upon



so large a scale with no other purpose than to give *éclat* and consideration to the Government.

The elections in France took place at the same time with the success of the French arms in North Africa. They varied from day to day, and M. de Polignac was determined that all was satisfactory. It was admitted that the Algerine success had gratified the vanity of the French, but Lord Stuart reports: "The progress of the elections is unfavourable, and whenever the deputies in the department in which the return has been deferred shall have been chosen, there is little doubt that the party opposed to the present Ministers will bring together a majority of at least one hundred members."

After surveying M. de Polignac's position Lord Stuart says: "The nearer the crisis approaches the more the French Minister appears determined to run every risk rather than abandon the principles which he professed when the Administration was formed."

In the meantime, on July 16, Lord Stuart officially congratulated M. de Polignac on the success of the French arms at Algiers.

M. de Polignac now gave every assurance that the French had no desire to retain possession of the territory, and Lord Stuart remarks that, "the treasure which has fallen into the hands of the army having covered the whole expense incurred by the expedition, the project of a military occupation for the purpose of obtaining an adequate indemnity of course falls to the ground."

On the 19th M. de Polignac told Lord Stuart that he had resolved to divide the Algerine question into two parts: the one embracing the territorial possession of Algiers and its dependencies; the other relating to the immediate and complete abolition of piracy, tribute, and slavery throughout the Mediterranean. With respect to the first, he expects to remove all suspicion of an undue appropriation of the countries which the French army has subdued, by the simple acknowledgment of the

sovereignty of the Porte, and the consequent manifestation to treat exclusively with that Government for the possessions which the French were entitled to claim before the war, leaving the Porte to make the arrangements which they may think most expedient to secure their own authority over the whole Regency.

Whether the French Government would have had the courage to carry out its professions, or whether it had ever intended to do so, may be doubtful. But the foregoing history makes it likely that a serious breach with Great Britain would have followed. Ten days after the last conversation with Lord Stuart, not M. de Polignac alone, but also the dynasty he served, was overthrown by the Revolution which drove Charles X from France. Lord Aberdeen, instead of considering what should be done in the event of France evading her promises, was considering the place of exile, and the method of transporting "the Count of Ponthieu" to these shores.

Lord Stuart was taken entirely unawares. On July 23, 1830, the very day before the issue of the Ordinances, he wrote: "The various reports respecting the possibility of a *coup d'état* I believe to be utterly unfounded." As soon as the Ordinances were published, unaccompanied by any serious disturbances, Lord Stuart was at once instructed to deliver no opinion.

On July 31, Lord Aberdeen, taking advantage of a private conveyance, writes:

The truth is that from our inevitable ignorance of the actual state of affairs at Paris, it would answer no good purpose to furnish you with instructions which the next hour might become wholly inapplicable. Indeed we cannot form any opinion which ought to influence our conduct respecting events of which the progress is so rapid. We must, therefore, wait until we see a conclusion of some kind; or rather a conclusion of the first act of the drama; for I take it

for granted that we are destined to witness a succession of important scenes.

I do not understand how the city has been evacuated by the troops, who appear to have been everywhere the masters. If symptoms of defection were gaining ground, it might be desirable to prevent further contact with the people. If the troops brought together at St. Cloud continue faithful, and if they should be directed with energy, they may still be too strong for the population of Paris, even with the assistance of the National Guard. The desertion which has already taken place makes it impossible to confide in the steadiness of the other troops, but upon this subject, which is the most important of all, you can give us no information.

Judging from appearances, I should say that the question now to be decided is, whether a monarchy under any form will be permitted to exist, or whether we shall again see a republic.

Notwithstanding the astonishment, and even alarm, which prevail here, the effect on the Funds has been but slight, the persuasion in this city being, that a change of Ministers will set all to rights. Rothschild receives frequent expresses, and I hope you will avail yourself of his couriers when you are able.

Algiers was soon found to be a victory in name alone. Sickness decimated the troops, while the continued hostility of the natives rendered it impossible to retain even temporary possession of the territory.

Lord Stuart on August 23, 1830, reports from Paris :

Everything that has been said to myself and friends upon the subject of the expedition to



Africa indicates great indifference respecting the fate of their conquests in that country. That a permanent settlement is useless, because experience has shown that the climate and soil are not suited to the cultivation of the productions of tropical climates; that their exportations must therefore be confined to corn, which will entail ruin on the proprietors of the southern departments, who are now beginning to recover from the effects of the import of that article from Odessa under the administration of the Duke de Richelieu.

They consequently return to the opinion that it will be expedient to concert with the Powers interested in the commerce of the Mediterranean the best mode of re-establishing the authority of the Sultan in those countries, under arrangement for the suppression of piracy, slavery and tribute; and they consider that this cession may be rendered conditional, depending on the consent of the Sultan to admit rectifications, which may prevent future differences respecting the line of the Greek frontier.

Our Government and the French were much concerned as to the future residence of the abdicated Monarch. At one time Charles X believed that the vessel on which he was to embark had orders to convey him to the United States, and he requested that two English ships of war should be sent to escort him to Jersey.

Lord Aberdeen pointed out that this might lead to very complicated relations. To suspect America of lending herself to such "foul play," or to suspect France of it, was equally impossible. "The situation of the King is most difficult and cruel, but it is not foreign advice which can improve it."

On July 11 Lord Aberdeen reported to the Duke that he had seen Lord Marcus Hill, who had been in Paris during the late disturbances.



A SKETCH OF LORD ABERDEEN RIDING IN ROTTEN ROW.

Taken by H.B. from one of his cartoons.





He confirms in a greater degree than could be thought possible the total want of preparation on the part of the Government to meet any opposition, and indeed the certainty of their never having calculated upon any serious resistance to the Ordinances. So entirely ignorant of the real state of affairs was the King himself, that when Semonville went to St. Cloud on the 30th and used the expression, 'tout est fini,' the King imagined that the confusion was at an end, and proposed to return to Paris the next day !

Lord Marcus also confirms the general determination shown by the mob to abstain from pillage. All accounts agree that the number of persons unemployed and turned adrift by the manufacturers in consequence of the bankers refusing to transact any business, was the immediate cause of the assemblage being formed to resist the military. We may safely presume that the final result was looked to by such bankers as Lafitte, Casimir Perrier, Odier Delessert. However, it seems that we are now to have Philip I King of the French. I suppose we must take it for granted that King Philip will reign long and prosperously, especially as Lafayette has declared that his sovereignty is the best sort of republic. Perhaps it may expire with the Chamber of Peers, which it is clear is not destined to last long.

They have confined themselves to the destruction of the Peers created during the reign of Charles X, and have adjourned the question of whether an hereditary peerage shall exist at all.

The tricoloured flag and the setting aside of the Duc de Bordeaux may sanctify the title of the Duke of Orleans in the eyes of many, but I cannot think that even the charms of Republicanism and usurpation will enable him to last very long.

In the meantime it is possible that we may have Charles X and his family at Portsmouth. Sir George Cockburn<sup>1</sup> has been here to know how they are to be received. In these times the most simple and natural things become matters of difficulty. Under ordinary circumstances an abdicated King would be received with the personal honours due to a reigning Sovereign; and, at all events, a cargo of princes and princesses arriving in their proper character, as such could scarcely fail to meet with the respect due to their birth.

I have told Sir George, however, in case they should arrive before I hear from you, to desire the Admiral to go on board, and to pay every personal respect; but to make no public demonstration without further orders; and to plead his ignorance, and the absolute novelty of his situation, as his excuse for waiting for instructions.

The Duke of Wellington sums it up :

It is very astonishing, but it is quite clear, that the King, Charles X, was not prepared for the consequences of his Ordinances. Those consequences, however, were prepared. I don't think that the Duke of Orleans knew anything from either side; but he has been very ready to act.

I conclude that I shall receive, on to-morrow or Saturday, the accounts of the final termination of the affair, and I will immediately go to London. We can then decide whether we still act without assembling the Cabinet, or without waiting for the opinion of any of our Allies. There are some bitter pills to swallow: the cockade; the apparently verbal, but, in fact, real and essential alterations

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Sir George Cockburn (1772-1853) took part in the capture of Washington in 1813.

of the Charter; the act of placing it under the *sauvegarde* of the National Guard; the tone assumed by La Fayette. However, the best chance of peace is to swallow them all. If we don't quarrel with them they must set these matters to rights, or quarrel among themselves, or quarrel with us. Any one of these would be better for us and for the world than that we should at this moment quarrel with them.

I believe that there is not a Power in Europe who will not be relieved from a load of anxiety when it is known that we have recognised the new Government. However, we must look at everything.

#### LORD ABERDEEN TO LORD STUART

His Majesty, King Charles X, accompanied by his family, arrived at Spithead the day before yesterday; and the Marquis de Choiseul was dispatched with a letter, which has this day been placed in my hands, for the purpose of being laid before the King our Master. It appears that His Majesty has assumed the title of Count de Pouthieu, and that it is his wish to be considered as a private individual. He has written to the Emperor of Austria, in whose dominions he is desirous of obtaining a permanent asylum; and until the answer to this request shall be received, King Charles is anxious to take up his residence in this country.

His Majesty's Government, considering the strictly private character which the King has assumed, have not thought themselves justified in offering any opposition to the accomplishment of his wishes. It has been impossible for us to forget his age and his misfortunes; and we have felt, that to compel these illustrious exiles to seek an uncertain refuge from port to port would have afforded a spectacle little honourable to the Government of Great Britain.



It is intended that King Charles and his family, during their residence in this country, should fix their abode in some mansion at a distance from the metropolis, in which they may remain in privacy and seclusion.

There are still those who remember stories concerning the exiled monarch at the Palace of Holyrood. There is no mention in the Aberdeen papers of his going there, but we may believe that the plan came from Lord Aberdeen. Holyrood was sufficiently "in privacy and seclusion" at that date, and one wonders what inhospitable welcome it gave the exiles. Not worse perhaps than that which it extended to the young Queen Mary, also accustomed to all the pomp and fleeting vanities of "la belle France," and at least King Charles was not the centre of plots between the sister kingdoms. There remains a kindly memory of an unfortunate gentleman, lavish with his gold and silver, and looked upon with respect by the good-hearted people, who knew so little about the "Ordonnances" or the rival claimants to the throne of France. Nor did they know of the tossings to and fro, the desire for America and the Low Countries before his little fleet finally brought him to the shores of England. "Country houses have been burnt and pillaged by the populace in the departments of Corrèze and the Garonne," but safe in the ancient Palace of Holyrood lived the exiles.

Lord Aberdeen sent a despatch to our Ambassadors in which he summed up the history of these months :

The events have followed each other with a rapidity which has afforded little time for examination or reflection, and a very few days have been sufficient to overthrow the established Government, to dethrone and expatriate three generations of Princes, and to call a new dynasty to the succession.

The Revolution being now consummated by the elevation of the Duke of Orleans to the French

throne, we ought rather to direct our attention to the actual condition and character of the Government of France, and to the manner in which it may exercise an influence upon the general welfare of Europe. His Majesty's Government have especially felt it to be their duty to consider how far the recent changes have affected the political situation of Great Britain and her Allies, and what course, under the extraordinary circumstances of the time, it may be most proper for His Majesty to pursue.

Lord Aberdeen pointed out the nature and extent of our engagements under existing treaties, and how far they were applicable in the present state of France. For this they were to look for the objects of the general Treaty of Paris of November 20, 1815, afterwards explained by the protocols and declarations of the contracting parties at Aix-la-Chapelle in the year 1818.

There the Allied Powers, having overthrown the usurpation of Bonaparte, and being anxious to protect Europe from the evils which surrounded it, entered into a solemn Treaty for that purpose. The stipulation by which the Allies bound themselves to exclude for ever from the throne of France any member of that family, and to resist all territorial aggression on the part of the French Government, were sufficiently explicit. Should, however, the same revolutionary principles reappear under other forms, convulsing France, and thereby endangering the repose of other States, the Allies further engage to concert among themselves, and with His Most Christian Majesty, the measures which they may judge necessary to be pursued for the safety of their respective States, and for the general tranquillity of Europe.

Manifestly this precise case has occurred in France, and was not foreseen or provided for in the

Treaty. The object aimed at was the confirmation of the order of things in France, founded on the Royal authority, and of the constitutional Charter. The danger to be guarded against was the overthrow of this order of things by revolutionary principles under some form or other.

The Revolution having been consummated, the question now arises, whether revolutionary principles have appeared in such a form as to endanger the repose of other States.

It cannot be denied that the resistance to the decrees of Charles X has been followed by acts which are too well calculated to excite uneasiness and apprehension. The adoption of the revolutionary colours, the National Guard, and the arbitrary destruction of a large body of the Peerage, with the threatened abolition of the hereditary character of the Chamber, all recall to our recollection the early periods of the Revolution, although we may be permitted to hope that the horrible excesses which disgraced the progress of that event will be avoided.

Under these conditions there is nothing clearer than that the Great Powers must act in perfect union and concert, founded on their determination to preserve the state of territorial possession as settled in the Treaties of Vienna and Paris. The very dangers of the Revolution in France, with all its accompanying circumstances, point to the propriety of union, and acting promptly so as to avert approaching danger. The spirit of the Treaty appears to justify and to require this concert. His Majesty's Government has decided that we should studiously abstain from all interference in the external affairs of France. This principle, at all times recommended by the British Government, deserves the utmost attention at the present moment.



In the actual state of France it is not only necessary to avoid every reasonable ground of offence, but to afford no pretext for complaint of any kind. Should we unfortunately be destined again to endure the calamities of war, it is more than ever indispensable that we should exhibit our enemy to the world as being unquestionably the aggressor. The justice of our cause will prove the chief cause of our strength.

The opinions of our Allies upon this subject coincide with our own. Despatches from the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin addressed to the representatives of Austria and Prussia fully confirm the system of policy which I have now endeavoured to inculcate.

A watchful neutrality is recommended, with an avowed determination to protect the integrity and independence of all States as established. In view that the despatches from the different Governments have made no mention of the Duke of Orleans as King of France, we find ourselves in a somewhat insulated position.

It seems natural, with the course taken to abstain from all interference, that we should not hesitate to acknowledge the Sovereign placed upon the French throne. The proposed neutrality of the Allies has been dictated by a desire to give no cause of umbrage to the French nation or Government, and thus, if possible, to secure the continuance of those blessings which Europe has enjoyed during a long interval of peace. If we failed to recognise the Sovereign it would create excitement and irritation in France, and our hopes of preserving peace must in proportion be diminished.

Lord Aberdeen pointed out that in the midst of measures subversive of the Royal authority the

principle of monarchical government had still been preserved.

It is by upholding this principle that we shall best defeat the designs of those who would throw France into confusion and render foreign war inevitable.

The proximity of our situation demands a speedy decision. Under these circumstances, and influenced by these considerations, His Majesty has determined to acknowledge the Duke of Orleans as King of the French.

His Majesty has felt also, that in coming to this determination, and to enhance its value, the recognition should be made promptly, frankly and cordially. I have therefore received His Majesty's commands to transmit letters to Paris without delay, for the purpose of accrediting His Majesty's Ambassador to King Louis Philippe."

## CHAPTER VI

### PART III

#### NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM (1830)

“We are on the threshold of a great age, the age of the Peoples.”—  
*Mazzini.*

No sooner were the affairs of France settled than trouble appeared at The Hague. Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Duke :

There is unpleasant intelligence from the Netherlands, but it might have been still worse. There were some disturbances, which were met by the magistrates calling on the Garde Communale to turn out and protect the public peace. The riot, serious as it was, seems to have been in great measure accidental. It has been the custom for some time to attend the representation of *Masaniello* (“Le 25 Août on jouait sur la théâtre de Bruxelles ‘La Muette de Portice,’ qui montre précisément sur la scène une révolution populaire. Les jeunes gens, sortirent du théâtre, criant ‘Imitons les Parisiens ’”) for the purpose of applauding passages favourable to liberty. In consequence of the events in France, this piece had drawn an immense number of persons, and the disturbance appears to have commenced among the overflowing of the theatre. No leader has shown himself, nor did the populace assemble at the house of any popular Liberals. Perhaps the worst symptom is the destruction of the Royal Arms upon the shops of the King’s tradesman. At all events it is a great



blessing that this tumult should have been suppressed so soon, even without much aid from the military, as there were but two battalions in the town. They will now have time to take measures of precaution.

Sir Charles Bagot, our representative at The Hague, writes of the frontier difficulty. It was a great error to leave the fortresses so utterly defenceless as, upon the first suspicion of danger, they proved to be. The storm, if one be brewing, will not burst on this side, and it is not to the north that the eyes of the present French Government will be turned. If a single French regiment enters the country with overtures of fraternisation I would by no means answer for the consequences.

The Duke returns the papers :

Falck knows better than I do what is the constitution, and what are the duties of the Garde Communale. If they are at all the same as those of the Garde Nationale of France, the retreat of the troops is decisive. When I see that besides the Garde Communale, the inhabitants received arms from the store, I cannot but be apprehensive that this is another revolution.

Sir Charles Bagot writes on August 27 :

Heaven only knows whether it is a riot merely or a revolution that my despatch of to-day announces. Till we know whether the contagion spreads, and the other towns in Belgium imitate the example of Brussels, it is impossible to decide. It is evident that as yet nothing but the dregs of the people have appeared as actors in the disturbances, that there has been no distinct political cry or rallying word, and that mischief and pillage have been the chief objects of the mob.

Every hour that passes away before the disturbances are quelled in Brussels increases the danger of contagion to the other towns. I tremble for the first accounts from Liége and Hainault; I tremble too, though not so much, for those from Ghent and Bruges. I do not think the spirit is bad at Antwerp.

I fear (he writes again) that the question is pretty nearly decided, and that it is *not* mere riots, but something very like complete revolution. It is true that at present we know of no disturbances anywhere but at Brussels. There has been some little assembling of the people at Louvain, but it was without disorder, and has led to nothing. The complexion of things, however, at Brussels is, as far as it can be understood, because as yet it is very far from clear what the armed bourgeoisie, which is in full possession of the town, really is, and really designs; and whether it proposes to itself complete separation from the general Government,—whether they mean independence—whether they mean junction and fraternisation with France, or whether they are acting by their own impulses or by French excitation.

The Princes are now in the act of starting for Antwerp, and the States General are to be immediately convoked *here*, because we are still (that is, till the third Monday in October) in the year of Hague residence. In four or five days I believe that a force of about 10,000 men may be collected in and about Antwerp. If the other towns remain quiet, this may be ample to impose upon an open town like Brussels.

It was not unnatural that France was supposed to have a hand in this mysterious revolution, and Sir Charles was asked, in the event of this proving

true, whether the Netherlands could look for military assistance from England. He advised them in their own interest to do nothing which can provoke the cry of, or feelings inspired by, "baionettes étrangères."

Later Sir Charles Bagot writes : " Revolution, in the broad sense of the word one can hardly call it, but at Liège and Brussels at least the people are ascendant, and in an attitude of armed negotiation with their Government."

Again Sir Charles communicates that the whole may turn out to be a regular conspiracy :

Not one to overturn the fabric of Government, but one to force the redress of grievances. In this conspiracy it is now nearly certain that some of the first families of Flanders, both in name and wealth, are, and have long been, concerned.

He continues :

It has been the tactics of these persons to get hold of the Press, the *Courrier des Pays Bas* and the *Belge* newspapers. Their plan has been to supply the lowest rabble with money, and then to set them on as a rabble, to attack and pillage the houses of certain obnoxious persons. When this had taken place, and the inhabitants of the towns were sufficiently alarmed, the scheme was then to get the middle classes and bourgeoisie to arm for public tranquillity, then to engage the mob so to act against this armed bourgeoisie as to induce them to fire upon them, and thus establish animosity between them; while, on the other hand, with money and brandy, they kept the mob up to the proper mark of pillage and riot, in order to justify the continuance of the bourgeoisie in arms.

By this contrivance they managed to get and keep



under a most plausible and popular pretext, arms in the hands of the more respectable classes, and to put them in a condition to prevent plunder and riot going too far.

If this be true, many of the Garde Bourgeoisie will gradually retire on this account, others will do so from the loss and inconvenience occasioned to them by their military duties; and such a wish will arise for the protection of more regular troops, that what is now the great instrument of the agitators will crumble from under them. The regular troops, once peaceably admitted (a single shot might, I admit, change all this) into Brussels, and the States General once assembled *here*, the most effective part, if not the whole of the machinery, upon which the promoters of the mischief have reckoned is broken up. We must add to this chance the prospect that there now is that France will in no way come to their assistance, for Baron Verstolt told us yesterday that he had received more than a hint that M. de Potter<sup>1</sup> had made a distinct offer to the French Government to put them in possession of the Belgian Provinces, and that another and separate proposal of the same nature had been made directly from Brussels, both of which had been met in Paris with a decided and unqualified rejection.

The revolution in the Netherlands continued to give great anxiety. Lord Aberdeen, writing to the Duke, says :

You will have received Lord Stuart's despatch. I do not clearly understand his proposition. If he means that we are to join the French Government in advising the King of the Netherlands to attend to the demands of his subjects, the idea may

<sup>1</sup> L. A. de Potter (1786-1859), a Belgian statesman.

be at once rejected. What advice it may be proper to give to the King of the Netherlands is another question, and which properly may belong to us. We are bound to secure the union of Belgium with Holland upon certain conditions; we have therefore a right to see that those conditions are fulfilled, and that our guarantee shall not unnecessarily be called into execution. Our advice has not been asked; and what may be the real state of the question between the King and his Flemish subjects I do not know. Probably no reasonable ground of complaint exists.

The Foreign Minister at Paris, M. de Molé,<sup>1</sup> had called on Lord Stuart to tell him that his despatches showed that the movements at Brussels had produced an effect throughout the Belgian Provinces which induced him to consider the maintenance of their connection with Holland extremely doubtful, and he regretted that the King of the Netherlands should delay the communication with the persons in power at Brussels which are necessary to prevent the total annihilation of his authority in Belgium.

M. de Molé also stated that the Belgian demands were all concerned with local objects, and that the French Government was not compromised by the events taking place. Although the four Great Powers are determined not to interfere in the affairs of France, he felt sure that they were too interested in the maintenance of the present state of territorial possession to encourage the apathy of the Dutch Cabinet by remaining silent spectators of the events which were taking place in Belgium.

M. de Molé therefore felt anxious to ascertain whether the Powers would agree to address to the Court of the Netherlands a representation asking it

<sup>1</sup> Comte M. de Molé (1781-1855), Foreign Minister to Louis Philippe.

to get into touch with the Belgian Provinces, and endeavouring to find out the causes of their discontent, and to prevent their total separation from Holland.

Lord Aberdeen wrote on the perplexed situation to Sir Charles Bagot :

Your revolution, or whatever it may be called, is a most incomprehensible affair. We know so little of the real causes, and of the actual state of parties, that advice is out of the question, except of a general nature which cannot be required by so sensible a man as the King of the Netherlands. The question of foreign interference is of a most delicate kind, and cannot be answered offhand. You have done quite right to discourage the notion, and I apprehend it could not take place without leading to a general war. At the same time our Treaties are sacred, and the Netherlands Government may naturally rely on the performance of our engagements. We have guaranteed the union of Holland and Belgium, and if the King has faithfully performed his part, we must perform ours. But I hear nothing of separation, nor do I know what are their grievances. Do not imagine that I am not fully aware of the force and bearing, and tremendous possible consequences of the despatches which I send, but we are come to this,—the kingdom can be no longer saved by its own internal unaided means, and it now remains for the Allied Powers to decide whether it is to be preserved at the risk which foreign intervention of any kind may, and probably will, incur.

It is for you to determine whether the communication which I announce from hence does or does not make out the *casus fœderis*. It is for you also to determine whether, if we have the intention, we



have also the means of prompt and of sufficient assistance; you too must decide whether France can be made to stand aloof while we fulfil the obligations (if obligations they prove to be) of our Treaties, or whether they are to be fulfilled at the peril of war with her. All this is high matter, *qui n'est pas de mon ressort*; but rely upon it that this Government has no longer the physical means of defending the greater part of Belgium against France, or against those who design to surrender it to France.

All that *has* happened is remotely French, all that is happening is directly so. It is no cause, real or pretended, of Belgium which has triumphed at Brussels. If it is not the cause of the French Government, it is the cause of a French faction which is superior to the Government and the result must be the same for the rest of Europe. It is no longer a question of what this Government can or cannot do to satisfy demands. We have passed that stage. I believe that no declaration of the King's and no measure of the States General would now produce any effect whatever in the greater part of the Southern Provinces. All that is opposition to the Government, all that is even home-made faction, is now swept away. I have no doubt the French Government are perfectly sincere in their desire not to interfere, but they are powerless, and the impulse is given from Paris in spite of them, and by persons nearly connected with the Government.

Sir Charles Bagot wrote from The Hague, September 3:

I know not what you will think of the Prince of Orange's measure of entering Brussels as he did; I know not what to think of it myself. If the choice lay between entering as he has done and taking the



#### AT BUCHAN NESS.

A marine villa built in 1840 by Lord Aberdeen, on a promontory which is the most eastern point of Scotland, not far from Peterhead. The picture shows Lord Aberdeen, accompanied by Mary, Lady Haddo, in the marine garden, which was formed on a series of small terraces, in a sheltered ravine, descending to the sea.

From an oil painting by J. Giles, R.S.A.A.





town by assault, he has perhaps acted wisely, and it may prove a great card in his hand that, as yet, no drop of blood has been spilt under his orders, by the national troops, but it was a fearful experiment, and I suspect that it was with the greatest difficulty that the Garde Bourgeoisie saved him from worse than insult on the part of the mob when he first entered the town. That danger past, his reception was on the whole good, and it is scarcely possible that the confidence and courage which he has displayed should not, in the end, impose even upon that basest of all human congregations, a Belgian rabble.

I do sincerely believe that in the whole history of the world there never was an example of a popular revolution so totally uncalled for, and so totally unjustified by real popular grievances, as this will prove to be, if it really ends in becoming revolution in the extended sense of the word. I hope, and I still think, that it will not so end, but, end as it may, the work of fifteen years is already undone, and no man living can say yet how it is all to be repaired.

On September 9 Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Duke of Wellington :

The affairs of the Netherlands have now assumed a new character, and one which will require much attention from us as well as from the other European Powers. The question of some kind of separation will be considered by the States General under the King himself. What the precise nature of the proposition is does not yet appear; but it is clear that if the separation shall be of such a character as to satisfy the authors of the insurrection, it will be equivalent to a juncture with France. A mere separate administration for the Flemish Provinces under the control of the King might be of little consequence, but if the

finances are distinct, and the army also, what becomes of the engagements of the King to protect the frontier? The interest of the Great Powers, and especially of this country, in the state of the fortresses, and the money expended, will require to be attended to. I apprehend that no separation can take place such as is but too probably contemplated, without the abrogation of the Eight Articles of the Treaty of London. These form a part of the General Act of the Congress of Vienna, to which France is a party. The King will unquestionably refer to the Great Powers the consideration of the changes which it is proposed to make. The frontier was manifestly constituted against France: is France to deliberate upon the condition of that which is intended to be a protection against herself? But, as France is a party to the Treaty of Vienna, the question has become European and the French Government may assert their right.

In a despatch sent to Lord Stuart, Lord Aberdeen notes the desire of M. de Molé to exculpate the French Government from any charge of participating in the disorders which had broken out. France, through her Minister, had concurred in such measures as might be necessary for the execution of the Treaties, and in that had given evidence of the spirit of moderation and justice which had directed the Councils of the King of the French.

The condition of the Netherlands must be regarded with the utmost degree of interest by the Powers of Europe, as the result of the crisis might materially affect the objects proposed by the parties to the late Treaties, according to which the Belgian Provinces were united to Holland.

Lord Aberdeen pointed out that anything that gave a reasonable prospect of strengthening that connection would meet with the agreement of His



Majesty's Government, but the propositions of M. de Molé were not likely to be helpful. His proposal was that a joint representation should be addressed to the King of the Netherlands, which would point out the manner of his dealing with the Belgian Provinces. That he should communicate with the authorities in those Provinces, to find out their grievances, and to prevent if possible the total separation of the countries.

It appears (Lord Aberdeen wrote) that the populace of Brussels and of other towns, stimulated possibly by the example of what had recently taken place at Paris, suddenly broke out into acts of riot. No political object was announced, but the excesses were directed against the dwellings and property of certain individuals. A Burgher Guard was organised in self-defence, and this Guard had remained in possession of the town, assuming a power not only unconnected with the Government, but with the exercise of any lawful authority.

These persons are said to have petitioned the King for the redress of their grievances. We have no certain information of the grievances, nor of the petitions being presented. It would be extremely hazardous to give to a Sovereign so enlightened as the King of the Netherlands any general advice on such a situation. The King, already by a most wise decision, has sent the Princes, his sons, into the Southern Provinces, with a body of troops sufficient to restore order and to give confidence to the well-affected part of the community. He has convoked an extraordinary meeting of the States General, by whose deliberations he may be assisted. Under these circumstances we should incur heavy responsibility by interposing foreign counsel. Everything appears to have been done which is most



consistent with the character of a constitutional Sovereign; and we ardently hope, that by a judicious union of conciliation and firmness, the dangers which threaten the Government may be overcome.

On September 17 Sir Charles Bagot writes again :

The violent party, consisting either of pure Jacobins or of those who desire to throw the country into the arms of France, and the party which by comparison may be called moderate, are, as it should seem, now come to an open rupture. I cannot conceal from Your Lordship that the situation of the country and the position of the King are becoming every moment more critical. The military force does not amount to more than 20,000 men. Of this force the proportion of Belgians to Dutch is at least three to five; the fidelity of the Belgian part must, in such a struggle, be very questionable. As yet the Provinces of Liège and South Brabant alone can be declared in a state of open revolt; there is every reason to believe that the two Flanders and the towns of Ghent and Antwerp are decidedly friendly to the Government, but the other towns and a great part of the Plat Pays are only waiting the signal from the town of Brussels or from France. In all the fortresses of the frontier the population is greatly superior to their garrisons: the finances and credit of the country are fast getting into derangement; the Northern Provinces are becoming highly discontented with the supposed inactivity of the Government, and every sacrifice now made to the Belgian demands, and every measure which might seem to pardon or overlook the proceedings at Brussels, might endanger the King's popularity in this part of the country to a very serious degree.

Writing an undated despatch, Sir Charles says :

Since I wrote my despatches the Prince of Orange has been with me. His object was to ascertain, in consequence of the Council held this morning, what we would and what we could not do. For the *would*, I made him easily understand that it was quite out of my power to answer. For the *could*, materially speaking, I told him that I believed that there hardly ever was a moment in which we were so little provided. He seemed to admit that this might be the case, but he seemed also to think that we might afford a great moral assistance, by giving France to understand that in interfering under the engagement of our treaties, to maintain the order of things to which we were pledged, and nothing more, we should consider any obstacle on her part to such an operation as a declaration of hostilities against us, and probably against all the other Powers connected with us by the same obligations.

On September 19 fresh disturbances broke out in Brussels and the Burgher Guards were overpowered. Prince Frederick of Orange, concluding that action was inevitable, attacked the town. After four days' fighting, on September 27, the Dutch troops, unable to advance, were withdrawn from the positions they had won. On the following day the Lower Chamber of the States General decided in favour of a dissolution of the union between Belgium and Holland.

Lord Aberdeen wrote to his brother, Sir Robert Gordon :

The events in our part of the world are sufficient to move even the most phlegmatic Mussulman. The French Revolution has completed its first period; you will see that we have acknowledged the King

of the French, and the Great Powers are following our example. I have no great belief in the stability of the present order of things in France. The Jacobins are gaining ground, and the King and his Government are without power. The first change will probably be to turn the King into a President, that is in name; for in reality he is now nothing more. The condition of the Netherlands is most critical. The conduct of the King has been wise and moderate, as he has taken care to put himself in the right. But the spirit at Brussels, and Liège especially, is as bad as possible, and generally a separation will be desired. I have no conception how this will end. The French Government have not openly interfered, and indeed profess to regret this state of affairs; but many of the most influential persons in France are undoubtedly connected with the whole affair, and the nation generally are eager to resume possession of what they consider to be their own Provinces. I think no party in this country would agree to the separation of the Belgian Provinces from Holland, and still less would tolerate their union with France. Here then, with all our desire of peace, is a cause of war not very distant.

Germany is in an extraordinary state. Insurrections have been frequent. Brunswick, Hesse, Saxony, Hamburgh have all been convulsed, I do not very well know why.

As yet nothing serious has broken out in Italy, but it is to be feared, especially in Piedmont, where some symptoms have already appeared. I hear too that in the Roman States the danger is great. The Austrians are reinforcing their army in Lombardy, and I suppose are pretty secure.

You will want to know what we are about here. The newspapers will show you that we have been



nearly mad about this French Revolution, and the heroic populace of Paris. I think that people are gradually coming to their senses, and they begin to see what the revolution really is, and what are likely to be its consequences. We have behaved handsomely to the new Government, and if they stand we may preserve peace; but happen what may, if we take good care to be right, I think we shall be supported.

You will be astonished to hear that old Talleyrand is on his road as Ambassador; I have already received a letter from him, in which he refers to the pleasure of his former *rappports* with me. Considering that these related to the restoration of Louis XVIII, the recollection is rather out of place.

In other respects the country is going on well. We have had a good harvest, commerce is flourishing, and I believe manufactures of all kinds. The King is very popular, and cordially supports his Government. Although we have gained numbers by the late election, the general impression has been unfavourable, for we have met with signal defeats. I should say there was no general hostility to the Government, but there is certainly no zealous support in the country. The Catholic question has utterly destroyed all party attachment, and, having separated the Duke and Peel from their natural followers, has thrown them on the mercy of the candid and impartial, who, I fear, will never give the necessary strength to any Government.

For myself, I assure you that I am at single anchor; there are many things in leaving office which I should undoubtedly regret, but the motives which induce me to wish to retire are becoming stronger every day.

## LORD ABERDEEN TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

*Sept. 29.*

I think it best to send the intelligence which we have received from the Netherlands, without any delay. Its importance and character are such as to require immediate attention; and in this instance I act according to the instructions of Bonaparte, who decided that not a moment should ever be lost in communicating bad news, but that the good might be left to a convenient time. I will write to Peel to-night, for we may expect to be called upon by the King of the Netherlands immediately.

On the 3rd October he wrote further instructions to Lord Stuart :

We are desirous that you should take an early opportunity of seeing the King of the French, and conversing with him upon the present state of the Netherlands. You may impress him as strongly as possible with the conviction of our sincere desire to do everything in our power to prevent these convulsions from becoming the cause of war in Europe. He must be aware of the feeling of our Allies upon this subject, and the difficulty under which we are placed in recommending the most conciliatory and pacific course. A frank concurrence on the part of the King in friendly counsels may effect this; but if he should separate himself from the other Powers, and carry the principle of non-intervention so far as not even to assist in giving advice for the purpose of securing the continuance of a work to which France herself is a party, it is easy to see what must be the consequence. No one will believe the sincerity of those declarations of neutrality which are violated by hundreds of French

subjects every day, unless the Government should come forward in the spirit of peace, and prove that they are desirous of seeing an end of these troubles.

If the French Government will fairly act with us, and with the other Powers, in the endeavour to discover what may be the best practicable modification of the union, we may hope that the Belgians will come to their senses and that some arrangement may be made.

The present state of anarchy cannot continue, and if it could, it would be disgraceful to the Powers who have created this kingdom to permit it.

I fear, therefore, that without a friendly concert the course of events must inevitably lead to a state of actual hostility at no distant period.

Lord Stuart in reply stated that the views of the British and French Governments were sufficiently analogous, and that he could not doubt the French Government would concur in devising the means of bringing about a settlement of the affairs of the Low Countries, by which every interest might be consulted. He believed the happiest result would follow the similarity of opinion which prevailed in the two Cabinets.

M. de Molé acknowledged the stipulations of the several Treaties, and then said it would be necessary to consider the means at the disposal of the Allies. The Southern Provinces were now separated. Whether the indication of the opinions of the several Powers, through the King of the Netherlands, would in the present moment of irritation be a good mode of inducing them to acquiesce in the views entertained by the Allies, he felt that it was impossible for them to enter into direct communication with the Provisional Government which had been formed at Brussels, or to listen to any overture from that source.

A Conference of the respective Governments was suggested either at Paris or in London. The King



of the Netherlands was in favour of a concert between his Government and the Allies, and he thought the choice of the Prince of Orange to govern the Low Countries to be the most secure arrangement that could be adopted. He felt that the maintenance of the present order of things in his country depended upon the maintenance of peace with Great Britain and Prussia.

Lord Stuart after seeing the King, had a short interview with the Prussian Minister. He asserted that the views of his Court were the same as those of the British, and he said he would support the overtures which had been made to the French Ministers. The Prussian Government was preparing for every alternative, and in case the policy of the Allies should not be duly appreciated, and the King of the French encouraged projects incompatible with existing treaties and the tranquillity of other States, he asserted that military preparations in Germany were in a state of forwardness which would permit Prussia to bring a force of 260,000 men to the Rhine within two months from October 1.

On that date Sir Charles Bagot, writing from The Hague, says :

In the meantime the sceptre of Belgium has passed away, and the King reigns no more over it than he does over the two Jerusalems. Whether he is again to reign over it *par droit de conquête* is a question for you to decide. Everything is going or gone like a house of cards. I have no conception how we can weather the inevitable confusion of the finances. The expenses are increasing threefold, and the revenue is, of course, diminishing in at least the same proportion.

LORD ABERDEEN TO SIR CHARLES BAGOT

Oct. 6, 1830.

After what had happened in the Netherlands it is clear that great alterations must take place in the

manner in which the Kingdom is constituted, even if it be possible to preserve it entire. Our interests and the interests of the three Allied Powers are the same as those of the King. Nothing, therefore, can be more desirable than to get France into a negotiation with us, where her separate interest must be pressed at a great disadvantage, in case she is disposed to pursue it. *The short* of the matter is this, the affairs of the Netherlands can never be permanently settled without the concurrence of France. This can only be obtained by persuasion or by force; we are bound to attempt the first before we employ the latter mode. If the Belgians should see that France is employed with us in an arrangement of their affairs, upon the avowed principle of conciliation with Holland and separation from France, I cannot help trusting that they will cool a little in the work of revolution, and that by degrees they may be brought to reason. At all events we shall have the French Government committed to our principle, which must necessarily embarrass their future proceedings, in case we should disagree.

We have reason to think that the French Ministers are disposed to act with us cordially in this matter, and we ought, therefore, if possible, to strengthen their hands.

I received late last night the Note from Falck<sup>1</sup> demanding assistance. Having made our overture to France last Sunday, we shall wait the result before giving an answer to him. Have the goodness to place it in the best light to the King and M. Verstolk. Show them that, at all events, it is the safest for the Netherlands and the whole world. It may possibly succeed; in which case the blessing would be beyond all price, but even if it fail it will give a

<sup>1</sup> A. R. Falck (1773-1843), Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs.

moral power which we shall find of the utmost importance in the adoption of future measures.

Sir Charles Bagot reported his conversation with Verstolk :

I fear that I shall have some difficulty in making our project of negotiations palatable to him. He thinks that France will gladly accept our proposition,—that it is exactly what she wants, that it gives her time to form and discipline the 110,000 men that she has called out, that the Government neither can nor will give any security that, while negotiations are going on, money and assistance of all kinds should not continue to pour into Belgium as they do now, and that in the meantime the hands of England and the other Allies are tied up. Time, he contends, is everything, and though he does not deny the moral force which the Allies would acquire by putting France yet more in the wrong, he does not admit that it counterbalances the physical force which she will now acquire by every day's delay.

The Allies, he says, must speak to the French *Government*, but the Government cannot control the *Nation*, and that while the Allied Powers are holding diplomatic conferences, the French people, under the name of Belgians, will be securing all the fortresses, overrunning Holland (which has not, unassisted, the means at this moment of defending itself), and perhaps penetrating into Hanover and the North of Germany. War is inevitable in his opinion, and that all delay is provoking it in favour of France, which is not yet prepared for aggression, and to the disadvantage of Europe and the Allied Powers. I have not failed to endeavour to persuade him that an overwhelming foreign force might perhaps put down the rebellion, and secure, for a very short time



longer, the nominal integrity of the kingdom and sovereignty of the House of Orange, but that it would be but for a moment, and that nothing could be permanently arranged unless France, Government and people, were concurrent parties to the arrangement.

Lord Aberdeen's note on this letter was :

It appears to me to be neither more nor less than a demand to send troops into the Belgian Provinces as a preliminary to all discussion. It is the duty of this Government to look at the state of things at present, at the chances of the conquest of Belgium, and even of any benefit to be derived from the conquest if made.

In the meantime Namur had capitulated, and Antwerp and Malines were the only strong places left in the hands of the Royal troops.

Baron Verstolk again wrote on the French attitude that, whatever the intentions of the French Government, the French nation (to which he attributed the present complexion of the revolution) only desired to avert for a time an armed intervention in the affairs of the Netherlands, in order to acquire that force which at the present moment it had not, and which, when acquired, would make such intervention nugatory. He said that while the Allies remained inactive he could get no security from France that she would not continue to encourage and support the revolution by every means in her power, and contended that, late as it was, the presence of a combined Prussian and English force would suppress the revolution, and probably preserve that general peace which six months hence could not be preserved.

Both the Minister and the King pressed this view with warmth, and Sir Charles Bagot thought that he had had little effect in combating this view of the true policy of Europe, and the obligations of the four Allied Powers.

On October 15 the French Ambassador communicated the desire of his Government for a Conference of the Allied Powers, to consider the restoration of tranquillity, and the establishment of a regular Government in the Netherlands, and that it should be held at Paris. Lord Aberdeen answered that, though the original idea of a Conference came from His Majesty's Government, it had never been the desire of his Government to make London the usual place for such meetings. Under ordinary circumstances the proposal of the French Government would meet with no objection. "In the actual condition of the Netherlands," the despatch went on to say, "it is clear that these Conferences, to be really useful, should be promptly undertaken, and, if possible, speedily brought to a close. All the Ministers at the Court of Great Britain are ready to join in these deliberations, and to concur in whatever arrangements are thought suitable. At Paris, on the contrary, where no Austrian or Russian Minister is yet accredited to the King of the French, a delay highly prejudicial must occur, and the intrigues of the insurrectionary Government will tend to impede the progress of the negotiations. Nothing could more tend to give confidence in the desire of the King of the French to maintain the peace of Europe, and to execute the Treaties by which it exists, than that the French Plenipotentiary should be engaged in concert with the British Plenipotentiary and his Allies, in endeavouring to re-establish tranquillity in the Netherlands. We lament that such an opportunity should be lost by the perseverance in the proposal to hold the Conferences in Paris instead of in London.

On October 16 The Hague was expressing a wish through Sir Charles Bagot that the Four Powers which had signed the Eight Articles of London should appoint Plenipotentiaries, to whom might be referred the modification which it might be found expedient to make in the Fundamental Law. As



the rebellion in the Belgian Provinces had made such rapid progress, and had assumed so menacing an attitude, it was very uncertain whether either the Deputies or the States General would meet in sufficient numbers to proceed to business, or in short whether there remained any regular and legal means by which the differences which had arisen between the Northern and Southern Provinces could be adjusted.

His Netherlands Majesty felt that, although his Allies were disinclined to afford him military assistance in his present difficulties, a diplomatic measure of this kind might be of the greatest service to him, and might contribute essentially at this moment to the preservation of the general peace.

On the Plenipotentiaries meeting, the King of the Netherlands thought that their first measure should be to demand an armistice, and if this was conceded, the French Government taking part in the measure, there could be very little doubt that such an arrangement might be effected as would satisfy the just demands of each division of the kingdom, and prevent any disturbance of the general peace. The Netherlands Foreign Minister suggested that the proposed Congress should be held at The Hague, but as the Belgians might fear coming to The Hague, he suggested either the towns of Breda or that of Cleves.

Lord Aberdeen wrote to Lord Heytesbury, our Minister at St. Petersburg :

The importance of affairs in the Netherlands makes us less alive to anything else. I am not very sanguine about the effect of our conciliatory overture to the French Government, because I cannot help entertaining some doubt of their good faith; and this is confirmed by the proposition of Talleyrand to transfer the Conference to Paris. It is clear that the time of forcible interference is not yet come; nor can we yet tell what it is that we are to attempt to perform.



One only thing is quite indispensable—union—and I am happy to say that nothing can be more perfectly satisfactory than the spirit which prevails among the Four Powers in this respect.

Lord Aberdeen's next letter was sent to Baron Falck. It was in answer to a direct appeal made for military succour. Lord Aberdeen proceeds to sum up the situation :

Your Excellency may be persuaded that His Majesty will scrupulously fulfil all the engagements into which he has entered. The obligation of Treaties, the interests of his own people, and his regard for the person of the Sovereign, His Ally, all combine to render it impossible for His Majesty to remain indifferent to the fate of the Low Countries, and to the result of the present troubles. The great object of His Majesty's care, and of which he can never lose sight, is to prevent, if possible, the disturbances of these Provinces from leading to any interruption of the general peace of Europe. It is not to be doubted that the other Powers, parties to the Treaties and diplomatic acts which regulate the constitution of the Netherlands, are animated by sentiments equally pacific.

With these views His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris has been instructed to invite the French Government, according to those Treaties to which France is a contracting party, to join the deliberations of His Majesty and his Allies, and to concur in such measures as by common consent should be thought indispensable for the re-establishment of order in the Netherlands; and which should be framed with a due regard for the security of other States. The King of the French has testified his desire to enter into this concert, and we may be permitted to hope



HARRIET DOUGLAS, COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.

Sister of the 17th Earl of Morton. Married, first, Viscount Hamilton (son of John James, 1st Marquess of Abercorn), who died in May, 1814. She married secondly, George, 4th Earl of Aberdeen, at Bentley Priory, July 15th, 1815, and died August 26th, 1833.

From a picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence.





that the sincere endeavours of the Allied Powers, in conjunction with the enlightened judgment of the King of the Netherlands, will prove successful in applying an effectual remedy to the present evils.

The French still continued to raise objections to the Conference being held in any other place than Paris. M. de Talleyrand was directed to say that rather than come to London, the Conference should be conducted through the Ambassadors who were acting as the medium of their Courts. A further letter indicated that it was jealousy of the appointment by the King of Prince Talleyrand, and that the proposal to meet in London was due to his inspiration. To this Lord Aberdeen replied that the extraordinary reason of M. de Molé against the Conference being held in London did not appear to be worth serious consideration.

“It is for the French Government to determine in what manner they may think proper to employ their representative, but M. de Molé must admit that his observations about M. de Talleyrand afford no valid answer to the reasons for selecting London as the seat of the Conferences.” Lord Aberdeen said that if no better reasons were presented it would give rise to the suspicion that a prompt and satisfactory adjustment of the dissensions in the Low Countries was not the object of the cordial and zealous endeavours of the French Government.

The Netherlands also objected to the Conference being held in London, on the ground that if Holland were not chosen a very ill impression would be produced. A direct appeal was made on October 25 through Sir Charles Bagot for a certain number of troops for the defence of Antwerp. “It has certainly been turned by the advanced force of the rebels, and we are as certainly alarmed here for the Dutch line of defence.”

To the appeals for military assistance the Duke of Wellington made vigorous reply :

We are accused of *apathy* and our Ambassador at The Hague says nothing.

Then—we do not send military succours! The King of the Netherlands with great wisdom, determined in the first instance to consider the *insurrection* as an internal affair; and without consulting with us, to discuss it and determine upon it with the States General without insisting upon the previous submission of the insurgents. He subsequently tried force; and His Majesty's forces were not sufficient to obtain possession of the town of Bruxelle. It was at that time that His Majesty called for the assistance of his Allies, and particularly of England, and before the demand arrived, we heard of the revolt at Bruges, and of the loss of Ostend, Nieuport, Ypres, Tournay, Ath, Mons, Namur, Charleroi, Huy, and the Chartreuse at Liége.

The affair, however, increased in importance, but was still considered in the Netherlands as one of *internal insurrection*, to be settled by measures of legislation. We were to consider the affair then as domestic, and although there was and is undoubtedly great jealousy of French interference in it, no charge is made against the French Government.

Are we then to be accused of *apathy* in a cause interesting to our Allies, as well as to this country, because we do not at once get under arms, and put ourselves and all Europe in a state of war, in a cause in which we have not yet tried negotiations asked by the King of the Netherlands himself: in which course be it observed that we had commenced to negotiate before we received the application from His Majesty? But we ought to have sent our forces when required to negotiate, and to concert with others the means of pacifying the Netherlands! For what purpose? to secure the fortresses? They were lost,

and we should have been driven off by the fire of the cannon which we had provided ourselves!

To defend Antwerp, Maestricht, the northern division itself of the kingdom, from the hostility of the southern Provinces?

I am really ashamed of discussing such a question. I cannot believe it possible that the necessity for such defence exists; or that, the question being fairly discussed, any man, who had any regard for the honour of the Netherlands, could pretend that it existed. But I'll for a moment suppose that the King cannot defend himself against the Belgians; it is surely necessary that, before we provoke a fresh revolution at Paris, or a war, either with the existing French Government or with another which may displace the present Government, of which war, the first movement would be to place all the Netherlands fortresses in the hands of France, we should try at least the effect of showing to the world, and to the Netherlands, France engaged in concert with England and all Europe in an endeavour to pacify Belgium, and the further effect of negotiation.

The French yielded the point about the Conference meeting in London, and appointed a Plenipotentiary to act with Prince Talleyrand. Lord Aberdeen said that notwithstanding the ungracious manner in which the French Government had acted, he considered their acquiescence in the British proposals a great point gained. "Only let the King retain Antwerp and Maestricht, and the Belgians may go on making what Governments and Constitutions they please, without our chances of a satisfactory settlement being diminished."

Antwerp fell on October 26. Sir Charles Bagot writing says:

Whether the citadel has held, or can eventually



hold out, is more than I know. I have been this morning with Verstolk to urge the importance of maintaining the citadel as long as possible, and of reinforcing in every way Lillo, Batz and all the defences of the Scheldt. All that can be done will be done, but all is, I fear, very little. They are inundated.

If the country, I mean the old seven united Provinces, is only to be defended by its own internal means, and the French or Belgians, or whatever they are, choose to attack it, it must fall. It has absolutely no power of resistance whatever. The whole disposable force of the Government is not 30,000 men. They are ill organised and ill officered, and the extent which they have to defend is not inconsiderable. In addition to this the spirit of the country, without being bad, is beginning to be discouraged, and emissaries are at work endeavouring to make it discontented. On the other hand, the Southern Provinces are flushed with their successes; and though it may not enter into their policy to overrun this country, they are, I fear, quite able to do so if they please. It is *certain* that there is not less than 20,000 Frenchmen in arms at present in Belgium. A General Chasserond or some such name—a French General of Napoleon's who once commanded in the Illyrian Provinces, and who has been living for some years on property which he acquired in Limburg—has collected an army of 3000 men and 300 cavalry, with which he is so harassing the garrison of Maestricht (a mixed garrison, by the way) by keeping them constantly on the alert, that serious apprehensions are entertained for the result.

Conferences were held in London, an armistice was proclaimed, and Protocols were drawn up. These were strongly objected to by the King of the Nether-

lands, as he considered the Netherlands were called upon to surrender to the insurgents territory of which they never had possession, but that after having maintained at the suggestion of the Allied Powers, and at great hazard to the security of the Dutch dominions, the citadel of Antwerp, he was required to surrender it at the moment when its successful defence had contributed more than any other measure to check the progress of the rebel forces. The King went on to say that the ancient line did not even reinstate the seven United Provinces securely in their ancient possessions.

Sir Charles Bagot had ventured to remind His Majesty that the Protocol had expressly stipulated that the line suggested in the armistice should not in any way affect or prejudice the general adjustment which the Allied Powers would afterwards be called upon to make. The Plenipotentiaries had necessarily been ignorant of the exact position occupied by the respective forces of the two divisions of the country at the moment of the Conferences, but that according to all the later reports which they must have received of the danger to which this part of the kingdom was exposed, they might have reasonably presumed that the probable effect of the line which they had prescribed would be to restore to His Majesty positions occupied by the Belgians within the Dutch limits.

M. de Verstolk also agreed with the King, that the armistice upon the prescribed basis had never been what the Dutch Government had wanted. Nothing was stated in the Protocol as to the duration of the armistice; and it was left doubtful whether the King was at liberty to withdraw from Antwerp the military stores with which it was abundantly furnished. It was not clear whether Fort Lillo and the other forts which commanded the navigation of the Scheldt were to be evacuated or not; and nothing had been stipulated in respect to prisoners, of whom the Belgians had many, while the Prince

of Orange had given up nearly all those taken by the Dutch.

The despatch ended by saying that the King would ultimately acquiesce in the armistice, but that the matter which most touched his feelings was surrendering the citadel of Antwerp, and that the proposed line might need alteration.

The Protocol was signed by the five Powers in London on November 4. The line of demarcation was still under consideration, and the Netherlands Government suggested that Commissioners should be sent from London to trace the line on the spot. The armistice was to last three months; the citadel of Antwerp was not to be given up till the frontier line was definitely traced; all prisoners on both sides were to be exchanged, and the Plenipotentiaries were to make some public declaration by which the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg was excluded from the Belgian Provinces.

On November 26 the Wellington Government had fallen and Sir Charles writes a farewell to his late chief:

“More last words of Mr. Baxter.” You probably did not bargain for another letter from me, but I must be allowed to thank you for the few and very kind parting words which I received from you last night. They have gratified me more perhaps than you think. You have been thrust from your stool. The same fate may await me. If Whigs can save the country, in God’s name let them save it, but I fear the time is coming, if it be not already arrived, when the spirit which is universally abroad is neither to be influenced nor controlled by the Ministers of established Governments, be they who they may.

A young Comte de La Rochefoucauld told me the other day in my own room, that Monsieur de Talleyrand had certainly been a man of some



eminence in the old school, "mais que maintenant la jeunesse faisoit tout!"

This is the universal mode or creed, and no exception will be made in favour even of elderly Whigs.

I try not to croak, but I am seriously alarmed, and I believe in my conscience that our days are doomed to set in tenfold greater trouble than that in which they rose, and this is saying a good deal.



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